

THE  
NATIONAL  
AND ENGLISH  
REVIEW

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APRIL, 1953

No. 842

EPISODES OF THE MONTH

THE EDITOR

THE CHANNEL TUNNEL : A STRATEGIC  
NECESSITY

LORD ALTRINCHAM

SHOULD THE AIRCRAFT INDUSTRY BE  
NATIONALIZED ? YES

IAN MIKARDO

NO

PHILIP BREMRIDGE

MANCUNIAN MEMOIRS

IVOR BROWN

NEW CAR ROAD-TESTED

EARL OF CARDIGAN

AND OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS BY DENYS SMITH, RICHARD  
BAILEY, ERIC GILLETT, EDMUND BLUNDEN, CHRISTOPHER  
SYKES, RUBY MILLAR, AND ALEC ROBERTSON

*PUBLISHED MONTHLY*

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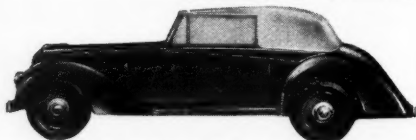


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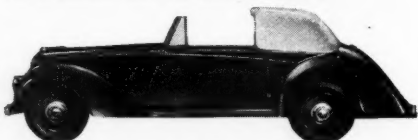
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# THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

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## EPISODES OF THE MONTH

AT the moment of going to press, we are saddened by the news of Queen Mary's death. She stood erect through two World Wars, through the ceaseless clamour of a perplexed and distempered age, and through many private griefs and trials. Her strength was unwavering and her services to the Commonwealth and to the British Monarchy are incalculable. We cannot, alas, pay her this month the extended tribute which she so richly deserves, but we can at least offer our humble condolences to all the Royal Family, and salute with gratitude the memory of a noble and exemplary Queen.

### **Stalin: Fanatic or Adventurer?**

ON March 4 Moscow announced that Stalin had suffered a cerebral hæmorrhage and that his life was in the balance. The world held its breath and waited. On March 6 came the news that he had died the previous night. So ended one of the most important and baleful careers in history.

Stalin's character and achievements will still be the subject of discussion when all the passions associated with his name have spent themselves and when the fears and hatreds which now bedevil humanity have ceased, God willing, to torment us. The question which now seems unanswerable will probably still be unanswered: Was this man a sincere fanatic, or was he just a cynical adventurer? Was his pursuit of power the result of his Communist faith, or did he merely exploit Communism as a means to satisfying his own personal lust for power?

Whatever his motive, there can be no doubt that he was successful. From his obscure origin in Georgia he became so great a tyrant that the whole world lived in his shadow and that half the world was totally enshrouded by it. The empire which he acquired is comparable in extent only to that of Genghis Khan, and in the degree of its regimentation only to that of Hitler. In sum, therefore, it is without equal; no man has ever won and held such power as Stalin.

But what was his motive?

**Communism and the Cult of Power**

**T**HERE are some who say that Communism is nothing more than the cult of material power, and that its most "sincere" practitioner is the man who seeks that kind of power most ruthlessly and effectively. Readers may recall the striking words with which Jules Menken ended his article on Stalin in our January number:—

. . . Stalin is a supreme embodiment of what Hobbes in a sombre phrase described as "the generall inclination of mankind"—"a perpetuall desire of Power after power that ceaseth only in Death." But this does not mean that Communism as "a perpetuall and restless desire of Power after power" will change its nature when, or simply because, Stalin himself dies. The character of the men whom Stalin has chosen and trained for his succession proves the contrary. The idolatry of power seeks its own perpetuation.

We agree that the death of Stalin will not necessarily change the nature of Communism, but we cannot altogether agree that Hobbes's phrase is a sufficient definition of Communism, or a sufficient explanation of Stalin's career. The facts seem to demand further analysis.

**The Utopian Element**

**I**T must not be thought that Stalin was faced in his youth with the choice either of being a revolutionary or of being nothing at all. The alternative which he rejected was in fact a tempting one—the prospect of steady advancement in the Orthodox Church. When he became a revolutionary he was a promising pupil in the seminary at Tiflis, and it is possible that he might have risen, in the course of time, to a position of ecclesiastical eminence. But he chose instead to be an atheist and an outlaw, suffering in the years between 1899 (when the seminary expelled him) and 1917 (when the Revolution occurred) many of those penalties, including transportation to Siberia, which he later inflicted so unsparingly upon others. He exchanged a life of safety for a life of hardship and danger, and he did this for the sake of Communism. In retrospect it is easy to take a cynical view of his behaviour, because Communism has since established itself as a gigantic system of power and belief, and because Stalin became, after many struggles, the High Priest of this new orthodoxy. But in fairness to him we must remember that the Communism which he embraced was a persecuted creed, a forlorn hope, and that its subsequent triumph was due quite as much to the fanaticism as to the ruthlessness of its votaries.

We must always reckon with the Utopian element in Communism—an element which may perhaps have caught the imagination of Stalin and have inspired him, paradoxically, to create a hell on earth. Of course there are other and baser elements in Communism, and these too may have had their effect on Stalin; human nature is complicated. But to dismiss him as a mere self-seeker is to underrate both the man and his faith, and it is never wise to underrate an enemy.



### Methods and Results

COMMUNISM has always claimed, like other fanatical creeds in the past, that ends justify means, and it is therefore possible to "justify" Stalin's most heinous acts—his mass-murder of innocent victims, his suppression of all freedom, his subversive and expansionist foreign policy, his manifold deceptions, his bewildering changes of front—in terms of his own accepted faith. Cynical as his methods appear to have been, we cannot infer from them that he was himself a cynic, because they are precisely the methods which Communism enjoins and permits for the achievement of World Revolution.

But if his Communist faith was genuine, the results of his work are, to say the least, surprising. In place of the autocracy and inequality of Tsarist Russia, he has created an autocracy which is far more potent and a society which is far more rigidly stratified. Instead of uniting the "workers of the world," he has divided them. Instead of putting an end to imperialism, he has given that word a more sinister meaning than it has ever had before. Such contradictions are inherent in the very nature of revolutionary politics, as Burke foresaw; but they have never occurred more glaringly than in the Russian Revolution as developed by Stalin.

### Savage Humour

PASSIONATE characters are often morose and saturnine, but Stalin seems to have had a good, if savage, sense of humour. Mr. Churchill describes (*The Second World War*, Vol. IV, p. 447) a convivial exchange during his visit to Moscow in August, 1942. After a heavy day at the Kremlin, Stalin took the Prime Minister to his own apartment and produced an impromptu dinner which lasted from 8.30 p.m. until 2.30 a.m. At one point, Mr. Churchill says,

I turned the talk on to Molotov. "Was the Marshal aware that his Foreign Secretary on his recent visit to Washington had said he was determined to pay a visit to New York entirely by himself, and that the delay in his return was not due to any defect in the aeroplane, but because he was off on his own?"

Although almost anything can be said in fun at a Russian dinner, Molotov looked rather serious at this. But Stalin's face lit with merriment as he said: "It was not to New York he went. He went to Chicago, where the other gangsters live."

This remark lends some support to the view that Stalin was just an adventurer, and that his ideology was just a convenient imposture. But evidence to the contrary remains very strong.

### "Mr." Stalin

NOT the least of his achievements was that he managed to "put himself across" as neither a fanatic nor an adventurer, but as a fatherly, homespun, benevolent figure. Hitler, with all his demagogic arts, was never able to present himself in this light. But to the Russian masses, and to millions of silly people abroad, Stalin actually seemed lovable. Perhaps one of the secrets of this *tour de force* was that he was a pipe-smoker. Pipes have a strange capacity for engendering confidence, and they are also associated with the idea of peace. Stalin was not the first public man to find them helpful to his reputation.

It was significant that when he died he was referred to in British newspapers, and by the B.B.C., as "Mr." Stalin. A more absurd designation than this it would be hard to imagine, but it was perfectly in keeping with the view of himself which Stalin had contrived to popularize. "Mr." Stalin, like "Uncle Joe," conjures up a mental picture which is wholly misleading. The word "Mr." suggests characteristics which are peculiar to the English-speaking world; it should be followed by surnames such as Chips, Pooter, Churchill or Roosevelt, and certainly not by the surnames of blood-stained foreign tyrants. Besides Stalin was not a surname, but a descriptive title (Man of Steel). If we refer to Joseph Djughashvili as Mr. Stalin, we might just as well refer to Jack the Ripper as Mr. Ripper.

### The Aftermath

BUT what is the position now that Stalin is gone? He has been succeeded as head of the Russian Government by Georgei Malenkov, a comparatively young man of unprepossessing aspect, who lacks even Stalin's limited knowledge of the outside world. Malenkov may have been selected and trained by Stalin to take over the leadership when he died, but personal qualities and, above all, prestige are incommunicable, and these are always the decisive factors in an authoritarian State. It is noteworthy that Malenkov has already relinquished the post of Secretary-General of the Party, which was the key to Stalin's power, and that he has given greater prominence to the military element, which Stalin had firmly thrust into the background after 1945.

But although there are signs that Malenkov's tenure is still somewhat uncertain, and although there may yet be a struggle for power within the hierarchy, we must not expect that the monolithic structure of Russian Communism will be split asunder by any feuds which may develop at the summit. When Lenin died there was a protracted struggle for the succession, but even in those days the system as a whole did not disintegrate. Now that it has been solidified by time and terror it should be able to survive, if need be, a still more exacting test.

## EPISODES OF THE MONTH

### Change of Policy the Only Hope

**M**ALENKOV has stated that he believes Communism and Capitalism can peacefully co-exist, and this has naturally caused a flutter of hope throughout the world. While we must treat such protestations with the caution and scepticism they have come to deserve, we must also realize that the present deadlock can only be resolved by a change of policy in the Kremlin, and that there should be an immediate and bold response to any genuine hint of change in that quarter.

It is just possible that the new ruler of Russia may prove more tractable than his predecessor. If Malenkov is indeed the man, some importance may be assigned to the fact that he was not one of the original Bolshevik revolutionaries, that he did not, like Stalin, suffer for his faith, and that he held himself aloof from the Party until it had obviously gained control. He may therefore be less doctrinaire than Communists of an earlier vintage, and he may be content to rule the vast new industrialized Russia which Stalin has bequeathed to him without pursuing the senseless aim of World Revolution. It is pleasant to speculate on these lines, but we must beware of doing so because, with such dubious evidence to go on, reasonable hope can easily degenerate into wishful thinking.

### Mao and the Satellites

**W**ISHFUL thinking has been manifest in the views which many commentators have expressed on the likely reaction of satellite countries, especially China, to the death of Stalin. We cannot follow the argument that those countries, or rather their Communist leaders, are liable to run amok now that the tutelary figure of Stalin no longer presides in Moscow. This might be plausible if any of the satellite leaders were in a position to assert their independence of Russia; but in fact this is not so. Every single one of them, including even Mao Tse-Tung, looks to Russia for essential aid, and most of them are only kept alive and in power by Russian bayonets. None of them is endowed with the special advantages which enabled Marshal Tito to defy the Kremlin; the kudos of a national hero, occupation of a mountainous terrain, and ability to survive, economically and militarily, without the help of Russia. (President Gottwald of Czechoslovakia, who died with rather suspicious rapidity after attending Stalin's funeral, was perhaps a would-be Tito; but the truth of this cannot yet be known, and anyway the conditions for Titoism in Czechoslovakia are, as elsewhere, most unfavourable.)

### The Tito Visit

**M**ARSHAL TITO, accompanied by his Foreign Minister, paid an official visit to this country last month, and this seems to have been an outstanding success. He arrived by sea on March 16 and left on March 21, after seeing and doing as much as could possibly be seen or

done in so short a time. He lunched at Buckingham Palace and had long conversations with Mr. Churchill, Mr. Eden and other important personalities. He visited Windsor, Hampton Court and Cambridge, in addition to most of the secular "sights" of London. He watched a display by some of our latest jet aircraft (two of which unfortunately crashed). Wherever he went he was closely guarded, and his motor-cycle escort became a familiar and not altogether popular feature of London life during the period of his visit. But most people recognized the necessity for such precautions, and his reception by those members of the public who were able to catch a glimpse of him was on the whole friendly.

### Diplomatic Friendship

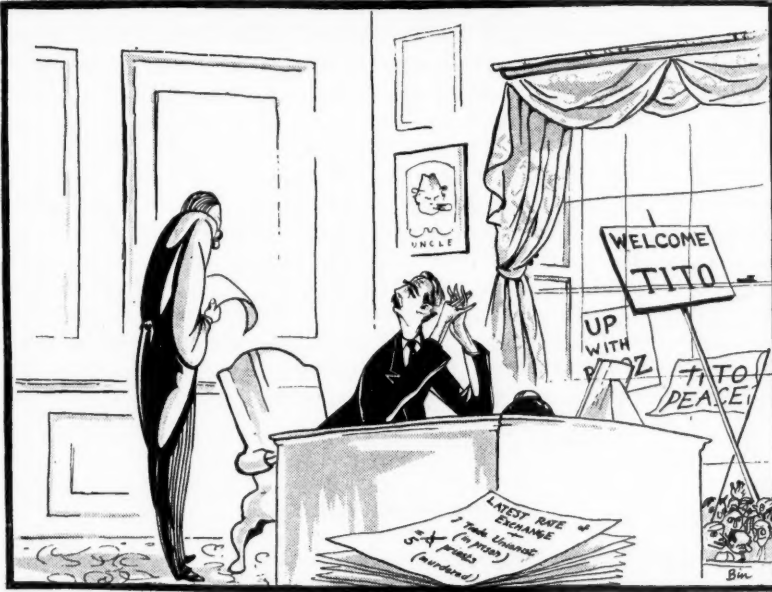
OF course there were also strong currents of disapproval. To those who can never see the difference between foreign relations and ordinary human relations it seemed wrong that our Queen and Government should entertain a ruthless dictator and a persecutor of Christians. To others it seemed strange that we should at one moment be denouncing Communism and at the next be giving a high old time to one of the world's leading Communists. For the benefit of such muddled, if conscientious, thinkers we can only insist that diplomatic friends are not chosen by the same standards as personal friends; that the internal politics of foreign countries are no business of ours; and that we are estranged from Russia, China, etc., not because they are Communist, but because they are aggressive. Marshal Tito will no doubt have much to answer for at the Judgment Day (and he will be in good company), but it is not for us to anticipate that embarrassing occasion.

### Now What About Franco ?

THE same argument applies with equal force to General Franco. No fair-minded person can say that his régime is any more unpleasant than Tito's; in fact it is probably less so. It may lack the inestimable advantage of being Left-wing, but it has the rather more substantial virtue that it is, after a fashion, Christian. Besides, these considerations are irrelevant, because, as we have said, the real test is whether or not Franco is aggressive and whether or not he would be a useful ally.

To us it seems perfectly obvious that he is not aggressive; he was (like Turkey, now a member of NATO) a neutral in the last war, and his neutrality was immensely convenient to us. He has a large army and he controls a vital strategic area in Europe. Would it not therefore be wise for us to be at least as forthcoming to him as we have been to Tito? Now that our Conservative Foreign Secretary has proved his impartiality by making friends with a Communist dictator, can he not at last afford to show real courtesy to a dictator of the so-called Right? We will not labour this point, because our cartoonist has expressed it better than we could ever hope to do.

## EPISODES OF THE MONTH



*"Message from the Caudillo: If any member of the Government is contemplating a honeymoon, he will be glad to show him round Spain".*

### Discussions in Washington

IT was in one way fortunate, and in another not so fortunate, that the visit to America of Mr. Eden and Mr. Butler should have coincided with Stalin's death. For the Foreign Secretary it must have been helpful to be able to discuss this great event at once, and face to face, with President Eisenhower and his advisers; and it is probable that much of their time together was devoted to this topic. But for both Ministers, and especially for Mr. Butler, there was already quite enough to discuss without any additional, unexpected theme, and it must have been very difficult to keep to the original points on the agenda when everyone was preoccupied by what had just happened, and by what might in consequence happen, on the world stage.

### American Support in the Middle East

MR. EDEN'S most notable achievement was that he appears to have persuaded the American Government to give us definite and unequivocal support in the Middle East. It was stated officially before he left that the United States Government regarded as reasonable and fair the latest British offer to Persia for a settlement of the oil dispute. This

offer was in due course rejected by Dr. Mossadek, who is beyond the reach of fairness and reason, but the value of definite American backing remains. If the Truman Administration had supported us in this way two years ago the present disastrous situation might have been avoided.

It is even more important that the Anglo-American alliance should hold firm in face of General Neguib's repeated demands for our unconditional withdrawal from the Suez Canal Zone. Here too President Eisenhower seems to have intervened to good effect, because as we go to press the American Ambassador in Cairo, Mr. Caffery, has been unmistakably rebuked for his attempt to pose as a mediator between contending parties. If Neguib finds that he has to deal with a united front of the English-speaking allies, he may even now choose the course of moderation, and we must all hope that this will occur. But if it does not, the need for Anglo-American unity will be all the greater. There must, as we said last month, be no more Abadans.

### Economic Overtures

THE object of Mr. Butler's mission was to win American support for the plan foreshadowed by the Commonwealth Economic Conference last December. This plan, which is known to the general public only in the vaguest outline, appears to be based upon the persistent desire to recreate the trading conditions of the nineteenth century, which are, in our opinion, unreproducible. Perhaps it is necessary that the Commonwealth and the United States should go through this solemn farce in order to discover, once and for all, that the economic gods they have been worshipping are false gods. Mr. Butler has confronted the Americans most skilfully and tactfully (as Denys Smith shows in his report this month) with the practical implications of their own much-vaunted theory; and a Committee has been set up under the chairmanship of Mr. Lewis Douglas to review the long-term aspects of American economic policy. But no decisions were taken during Mr. Butler's talks, and it was made clear in advance that no decisions would be taken.

We do not doubt that the Americans could greatly improve trading conditions in the world if they were to act themselves upon the principles which they have been so busily preaching to others. But even if they were to perform this unusual feat of consistency and self-sacrifice, the economic problems of the world, and of the sterling area in particular, would not thereby be solved. Apart from the internal problems which each country must tackle on its own, we must all face the fact that America will never be a creditor nation such as was Great Britain in the last century, and that the ideal of "fusion" is for that reason misconceived and doomed to failure. The American market can never play the part which the British market played under the old system. This is a truth which people seem most unwilling to grasp and it will probably only be arrived at by the process of trial and error. Mr. Butler's efforts can therefore be watched and even admired in a mood of philosophic patience.



## EPISODES OF THE MONTH

### Admirable Talk on Productivity

EVERYONE with a free mind and an elementary grasp of our national economy knows that our industry and agriculture will have to be more productive and also more efficient if anything resembling our present standard of living is to be maintained. To achieve this is the job of the National Productivity Council, which was very effectively addressed in that sense by the Chancellor of the Exchequer at its first meeting last month. He was followed by Sir Lincoln Evans who, as a member of the Council, observed with his usual good sense that "it is useless to think that by voting in the ballot box for a higher standard we can obtain it unless the means to provide it are first created in our fields and factories and workshops;" and pleaded therefore, in the workers' own interest, for acceptance of new methods and harder work. The audience, consisting of an impressive representation of both "sides" of industry, listened to them with respect.

### —And Its Effect

THIS was in the morning and seemed to promise well; but the dream of concord faded swiftly in the mists of trade union conservatism which gathered after lunch. No single trade union leader then showed any understanding or acceptance of what the Productivity Councillors had said; nor indeed did the employers, of whom only one spoke. The trade union case, supported by at least one member of the General Council of the T.U.C., (who has since been repudiated by that body), was in the main the old, very human and completely understandable one that for the men higher productivity and modernization could only mean working and agreeing many of their own number out of jobs. If plants must really be modernized, let the cost be borne by swollen profits. If markets were getting tighter, let us resume trading with our brethren beyond the Iron Curtain. As for new methods and harder work, no one saw how they could benefit the workers; they were dismissed objectively as an employers' or Tory ramp. Minds which can see no further than this are, of course, but chained to tradition and obsolete forms of thought; alas that they can be exploited to such deadly purpose by the Communists! One would have expected a display of intelligence from the employers; but there was no sign of it. Their only speaker was the manager of a small industry who pleaded simply for reductions of tax—an unanswerable case, but hardly happy in the circumstances as the sole managerial contribution to the debate.

### Three Requisites

IF this discussion reflects the present mood of industry—and there is little reason to suppose that it does not—it furnishes alarming proof of the extent to which workers and managers alike have been demoralized

by the effects of foreign assistance, easy markets, and the universal tendency of both to lean on the Government which has become an ingrained habit during the War and its aftermath. It was certainly no mere product of Communist propaganda; the idiom was so native, the attitude so familiar, the arguments so trite. What then? Three things stand out. First, Ministers must organize something on the scale of a national campaign to arouse both "sides" of industry to the facts of life. Courage and candour are indispensable. The Chancellor himself, for instance, must not be satisfied with phrases of doubtful import like "the need for more co-operation at the factory level" and get down to plain English like Sir Stafford Cripps's slogan (abandoned by his colleagues) of "Work or Want." Secondly, means must be found for reducing the immunities of "going slow," human as are the reasons which inspire it, and increasing the incentives to real work. And thirdly, fresh and independent consideration must be given to the "pros" and "cons" of blocking trade with Soviet Russia and, more especially, its satellites.

### Remember Stalin's Last Testament

FOR, as things are, we seem likely by that policy not only to lose available markets and cause some conflict with Asian members of the Commonwealth (Ceylon, for instance, cannot feed her people without exchanging her rubber for Chinese rice), but also to antagonize the majority of our own workers and so reduce our power of competition in the diminishing markets which still exist.

In this context it must not be forgotten that in his last will and testament, delivered late last year and therefore not long before his death, Stalin told his peoples that the ultimate triumph of Communism was in his belief assured by one factor above all others, namely, the struggle for markets bound to develop among the Western peoples, with the great Western market largely closed by tariffs or self-sufficiency and the Eastern markets almost entirely blocked. This was a warning of which the proceedings at the productivity meeting emphasize the weight. Neither we nor the United States itself can afford to let our sensible, honest-to-God trade unionists believe that anti-Communist sentiment in America is leading us into policies from which unemployment in this country may result; nor can we justly ignore the needs of other Commonwealth nations such as Ceylon; nor, finally, disregard the plain truth that, at this uncertain hour which followed Stalin's death, trade may well do infinitely more than propaganda to ease the international situation and safeguard peace.

*N.B.—Some of our readers will be interested to know that the Index to Volume CXXXIX (July to December 1952) of "The National and English Review" is now ready and obtainable from the Publisher, price 6d. (post free).*

# THE CHANNEL TUNNEL: A STRATEGIC NECESSITY

By LORD ALTRINCHAM

WHEN first mooted in the days of Napoleon the Third, the project of a Channel Tunnel was a purely business affair, intended to defray its cost by promoting trade and travel between England and the Continent. As such it was approved in principle by Her Majesty's Government immediately after the Franco-Prussian War. The French Government was officially informed of this attitude, and in 1875 Parliament passed an Act empowering the British Channel Tunnel Company Limited to acquire such land near Dover as might be necessary for its purpose. Similar action was taken in France; and it was not on commercial grounds, as we shall see, that the project was, eight years later, abandoned. At present costs a Tunnel could not possibly pay its way. If constructed at all, it would have to be constructed as a contribution to the security of Western Europe; and that is the case which I shall endeavour to establish for it.

Despite all this, I must, in keeping with Parliamentary tradition, begin by "declaring an interest," since I am a Vice-President of the *Compagnie Internationale des Wagons-Lits*. Though it cannot nowadays be advocated solely on commercial grounds, a Channel Tunnel would, of course, make for greatly increased cheapness of transport and ease of travel, in that way benefiting the National Railways both in France and England and offering new scope to the *Wagons-Lits* Company. It would make journeys by

night between London and Paris as comfortable as sleeping at home; and it would dispose of the baffling uncertainties of weather which attend sea and air passages. Better still, British travellers in search of sunshine could go to bed comfortably at Victoria and wake up on the *Côte d'Azur*.

These are agreeable dreams; but I mention the advantages and amenities of travel which the Tunnel would effect only to dismiss them as very minor considerations. My theme is loftier; and as Mr. Churchill is now reviving a noble tradition by quoting Virgil in the House of Commons, I shall follow his lead and say to those who inspire the policies of the North Atlantic Powers:—

*Sicelides Musæ, paullo majora canamus.*

In other words, "You whom we are trusting to preserve the genius of the Free Western World, use your imaginations and lift your sights, for the plans at present in being for safeguarding European peace are manifestly inadequate, in that they ignore, or seem to ignore, the main weakness affecting European defence."

This accusation may seem frivolous in view of all the planning, organization, eloquence and argument devoted in the last five years to the security of Western Europe. I make it advisedly nevertheless and believe that it must be faced if the peoples of Western Europe are to have faith in their future and the necessary confidence in each other. Certainly as things now stand

there is no mutual confidence, nor ever likely to be, between France and Germany. Grave therefore as is the economic strain upon all the peoples united under the North Atlantic Treaty, including the United States and Canada, they are not getting value for their money; and they will never get it if they persist in their failure to tackle the true reason, which is, to put it simply, the existence of two important sheets of sea-water. One of these is the narrow strip of sea, which we persist in calling the English Channel, though the French have never accepted that name. The other is the Atlantic Ocean, which divides Britain as well as Europe from North America.

To appreciate how important these two sheets of sea-water are, it needs only to imagine how much greater the security of Western Europe would be if it were part of a Euramerican land-mass as Eastern Europe is part of a Eurasian one—if, in fact, there were no expanse of sea-water between Lisbon and New York or Washington just as there is none between Moscow and Vladivostok or Peking. The main security problem for the North Atlantic Powers is created by the North Atlantic; but for that they would constitute a combination of industrial and military strength with which, for many decades to come, Eurasia could not stand comparison.

If, then, the North Atlantic were a physical division only, it would be serious enough, since the greater part of the economic and industrial power necessary to the security of Western Europe lies on the American side of it; but it is also a psychological division, because, for historical reasons, it is difficult for the two great nations of North America to see things as their European Allies see them. Hence the curious fact that the European peoples west of the Iron Curtain are closer in

feeling to Russia and her satellites than to North America on one central problem of critical importance, namely, the future of Germany. For political and economic as well as military reasons the rearmament of Germany is inevitable; but it is bound to prove calamitous in one of two equally forbidding ways unless its implications are better understood in the United States than they are at the present moment. The present situation is curious. Not only are Germany's neighbours, whether Communist or non-Communist, desperately afraid of a revival of German militarism; at least half, and perhaps even more, of the German people themselves are equally afraid of it. They are like dipsomaniacs reduced by *delirium tremens* and then by hospital treatment to total abstinence. Should some new demoniac corporal arise to regiment them, when arms are in their hands, would they be able to resist their atavistic passion for regimentation? If not, where would their new Führer lead them? He might, like the old one whose remains were partially consumed by fire and afterwards lost to history, lead them into another pact with Communist Russia—in which case the balance between the Free and the Slave Worlds would be most perilously tilted; or he might elect to turn against his Eastern neighbours and start another war in order to re-unite all the German people.

To these equally dark contingencies American statesmen, as at present advised, make one, and that, alas, an inadequate answer. They say that if Germany were to rearm only as an integral element in a European Defence Community under some kind of federal authority, neither contingency need be apprehended; the federal authority would forbid it. But neither the French nor the Germans themselves

nor any other nation in Europe, East or West, believes this. The French have an intellectual weakness for legal arrangements, and have produced the plan for a European Defence Community so closely knit that German rearmament will present no danger; but when it comes to ratifying some such arrangement, their faith in paper falters. The Americans for their part insist that federal constitutions are watertight, despite the fact that their own Federation was only saved from disruption by a civil war which could fortunately be fought in a vacuum, whereas a civil war in Western Europe to prevent Germany, if she wanted to, from leaving the Federation would inevitably precipitate a larger conflagration. The further idea that the Federation would be secured against German secession by British adherence to it is equally untenable. The problem cannot, in fact, be solved by constitutional arrangements confined to Europe, even if Britain be included, for the simple reason that Germany in her central and highly vulnerable position must perforce cast in her lot with Russia (who has much to offer her) if the association with the West does not give her real security against a Russian invasion. The Western European nations cannot give her that of their own strength, however organized, but the North Atlantic Treaty Organization can give it if measures are taken to ensure the reinforcement of the army defending the Elbe frontier with sufficient power and promptness. That is the real issue, and it will be very dangerous to blink it.

What form, then, is the more effective organization of NATO's immense resources to take? The indispensable air forces can be, and no doubt will be, greatly expanded; but stronger ground forces will be equally indispensable. The military authorities seem to think

that the standing forces now in Germany will be able to hold the first brunt of an invasion long enough to permit of the arrival of larger ones; but they have always insisted on the creation of large reserves capable of rapid mobilization and transport to the front, if Western Germany is to be held against a full-scale aggression from east of the Iron Curtain. Western Europe knows that in any such event the whole strength of Britain and North America would be thrown into the struggle; but could it be thrown in in time?

I am not concerned here with the question of organizing our reserves in time of peace, but only with that of transporting and supplying them in war conditions, should war be suddenly forced upon us; and I assume that, apart from air squadrons with their ground personnel and air-borne divisions, both reinforcements and supply would be carried by sea to the most convenient ports in Western Europe. This brings me to the "pros" and "cons" in modern war conditions of a Channel Tunnel.

The "cons" have hitherto always been military. A Joint Select Committee of the two Houses of Parliament was, for instance, appointed in 1883, eight years after certain powers had been conferred by Parliament on the Channel Tunnel Company, with the duty of investigating and reporting on the military objections to the scheme which had meanwhile become insistent. Opinion on the Committee was so divided that it failed to produce a Report; but it voted by six to four against the Tunnel, Lord Lansdowne, the Chairman, voting for it with the minority. He was one of the original authors of the Entente Cordiale and a man of vision. Though constantly revived, the scheme made no progress during the years of preparation for World War I; but after that War, in 1924, it was submitted to the



Committee of Imperial Defence, which concluded, after careful examination, that "its advantages were not commensurate with its disadvantages from the military point of view." This decision, however, only temporarily repressed its many convinced supporters, with the result that in 1929 Mr. Baldwin appointed a Sub-Committee of the Committee of Civil Research to investigate and report on its "economic aspects." After most exhaustive research, aided by a distinguished firm of civil engineers, this Committee produced a Report in 1930 which, with the exception of one member, advised in favour of the Tunnel as a commercial proposition, estimating that the cost would be approximately £5 million for a pilot tunnel and £25 million for two railway tunnels. The alignment chosen was that of the old Company between Dover and Calais. Nothing was said in this Report about its military aspect, the minority member of the Committee objecting to the project solely on the ground that it might damage British agriculture and shipping. Nothing was, however, done about it in the nine years preceding World War II, and I do not know whether or not its military advantages and disadvantages were re-examined.

The past in any case has little bearing on the issue to-day, because the military arguments against the Tunnel have completely lost validity in this air age, whereas the commercial arguments in favour of it have been exploded by the skyward rise of costs. The three tunnels which were to have cost £30 million all told before the War would now cost four times that amount, though modern engineering facilities would probably reduce the time needed for construction by half, that is, from six to three years. On the other hand, £120 millions spent on the Tunnel over two or three years would compare very

favourably with the £250 millions to be spent on new European air-fields in the present year alone, if it helped in any way to ensure that those air-fields were never short of fuel and all the other sea-borne material they will require.

As for the military arguments, the main thing now required for the security of this island is that hostile bombers and guided missiles should be kept to bases east of the Elbe. The Tunnel would therefore be a real asset on the side of security if it assisted the forces of Western Europe in the land and air battle on or about the Elbe frontier. If we lost that battle and the enemy reached the Calais end of the Tunnel, it could of course be put out of action "for the duration"; but I doubt if that would be much consolation in face of the ruin which would be hurled against us at close range through the skies. We are, in fact, as much interested as France or Germany or any other European member of the North Atlantic group in preventing the Soviet legions from sweeping west to the Ruhr or the Rhine or any part of the European coasts from Norway to the Pyrenees; and we should give the most urgent consideration to any project, such as the Tunnel, which may help to mitigate the worst handicap of the North Atlantic group, namely, that the North Atlantic and the Channel divide its Continental European members from its great American and British reserves of power.

I have been told when arguing this case privately with advanced protagonists of the air that tunnels are out of date because air transport will supersede all transport by road, rail and sea; but I find it difficult to take this contention seriously. From the military standpoint—supposing air transport on that scale is feasible at all, which I greatly doubt—it would surely be madness to spend so much on the tail of



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your fighting forces when teeth, especially in the air, are your first and most imperative necessity. And as for its economic aspect, this would surely be annihilating. We shall have trouble enough to afford the fighting strength, active and reserve, which is indispensable for an adequate defence system and therefore for the maintenance of peace. Needless to say, none of this applies to air-borne divisions, which are "teeth" and very essential ones at that.

On the other hand the "pros" in the argument must jump to the eyes of all who remember that the dangers of sea-transport under U-boat and air attack brought us within an ace of defeat in the last two Wars and would certainly be no less formidable in the next. It would seem that the difficulties of that problem would be measurably reduced if it were possible to avoid the concentration of all reinforcement and supply across the Atlantic on French ports. In this respect a Channel Tunnel might be expected to save much man-power and risk, since men and material unloaded in our Western harbours could be carried by rail straight to the European front without further loading or unloading at Channel ports. Indeed, if a Channel Tunnel proved successful, it might be worth our while to investigate the feasibility of another between Northern Ireland and Scotland. The shortest route is no longer than that between Dover and Calais; and a tunnel there would not only shorten the Atlantic passage, saving shipping and risk, but also increase the number of ports available at far range from enemy air attack. The European members of the North Atlantic group would assuredly sleep more soundly if they knew that reinforcement and supply from North America could be railed without break from Londonderry to Cologne.

There must be great value in that last point if it is true, as I have read on good authority in both the English and American Press, that atomic bombs have a more deadly and durable effect over water than over land. It is stated that water, and anything over which the explosion of a nuclear bomb may drive it, remains radioactive for a great length of time, whereas land over which a nuclear bomb has been exploded can be rapidly cleared. If this be the case—and I find it difficult to believe that the public statements I have mentioned are entirely incorrect—it is obvious that any new expedient is worth consideration which may reduce our dependence on ports.

But, above all, it is most essential that British and Transatlantic statesmen should find at the present time some means of reinforcing West European morale; and they will fail in that task, if they ignore the sense of isolation produced in its European sector by the two sheets of sea-water which divide the North Atlantic community. Evidence of that sense is everywhere for those who know Europe, especially France and Italy. Take, for instance, one of the most popular authors and journalists of the day, Giovanni Guareschi, whose *Little World of Don Camillo* has been read by millions, translated from Italian into their own tongues. Two of his short stories are delightfully humorous and subtle skits on the efforts of Italian Communists to pose as peace-makers and so to discredit both the North Atlantic Treaty and the Marshall Plan; yet the best of them begins by observing that "the piece of international machinery known as the Atlantic Pact may have owed its name to the fact that between words and deeds there lies the breadth of an ocean." There, in the plainest terms, is the fear that gnaws at European morale—a fear, let me add,

which lectures upon the need for unity in Europe will never exorcize.

General Ridgway, when commenting on an exercise recently conducted by Field-Marshal Montgomery at the North Atlantic Headquarters (SHAPE) in Paris, emphasized what leadership and training can do to compensate numerical inferiority in fighting troops. That is true enough as regards active formations—all military history proves it; but military history proves with equal force that the morale of reserve formations reflects the moral climate of the countries from which their component human beings come, particularly when the latter are short-service conscripts, as most of the European reserves will be. Morale is an imponderable, and many factors, not least in importance economic ones, enter into it. But in Western Europe the most important desideratum is to establish some real confidence that the enormous weight of Soviet armaments—including now not only the largest army in the world but also the most powerful air force and the second largest navy—is balanced by a really effective counterpoise; and “effective counterpoise” in this context means North American reinforcement and supply transportable with sufficient certainty and speed to discourage invasion from the East as an altogether too hazardous experiment. On this depends our hope of peace.

Mr. Churchill once wrote that in momentous international issues, involving peace or war, statecraft must work out its designs at an altitude “where policy and strategy are one.” He has always been distinguished by that breadth of vision himself; so was General Marshall as Secretary of State; and so, to judge by his distinguished record, is President Eisenhower. None but political idiots will underrate the

difficulty of making such statecraft acceptable to democratic legislatures and electorates in time of peace; but the democracies are already doing much better than in the 'thirties, and a little better still should be enough.

It is therefore very satisfactory to read in French newspapers that the advantages of a Channel Tunnel are receiving attention from the military headquarters of NATO in Paris. Let us hope that it is studying the project with reference not only to its material advantages, but also to its psychological ones. For if anything material can offset the psychological effect of the sea-water spaces which divide the North Atlantic Treaty Powers, this is it; and the French, for their part, have never wavered in their desire for the Tunnel since the project was first seriously broached between the French and British Governments after the Franco-Prussian War.

On that aspect of the subject, I think I may without impropriety conclude by quoting an old French friend, whose opinions on all such subjects carried very great weight. I cannot ask his permission to publish a scrap of private conversation since he died a few months ago; but he had so often expressed a similar view in public that I cannot doubt of his consent. Raoul Dautry was a student of communications in their military no less than their commercial aspect, a life-long devotee of the Entente, and one of the very few French Ministers who never lost faith in it, though our refusal to join France in a United States of Europe caused him much distress. Discussing this with him not long before his death, I said: “Would not a Channel Tunnel do instead?” “Ah,” he replied, “si seulement!”—and his whole face lighted up.

ALTRINCHAM.

# SHOULD THE AIRCRAFT INDUSTRY BE NATIONALIZED? YES

By IAN MIKARDO \*

THE classic case for private ownership rests on three grounds: (i) that it is only the entrepreneur and the rentier who will risk their capital on speculative ventures, and therefore they are entitled to a fair reward for their risk-taking; (ii) that competition enforces efficiency, and as a last sanction the incurably inefficient firm will be driven into bankruptcy; and (iii) that only private enterprisers have the expertise and the verve required for marketing under highly competitive conditions.

None of these three grounds applies to British aircraft manufacture at the present time.

The manufacture of aircraft and aero engines uses proportionately more non-productive (or not-immediately-productive) capital than any other industry. Fundamental research, which is related only at long range to the finished product, is very costly. Applied research inevitably involves the rejection of many more ideas than are ultimately incorporated in the final design, and it is therefore (again inevitably) an "uneconomic" burden. Development and tooling costs are so high that they would be "economic" only when spread over very long runs—but technical considerations often compel runs to be short. The length of time which elapses between the initial conception of a project and the end-product flowing off the assembly-line—four or five years in the case of an aircraft, and even longer in the case of an engine—is itself an indication

of the high ratio of pre-production costs to value of production.

Virtually the whole of those costs in the British aircraft industry is borne not by the manufacturers but by the State. The major part of basic research is carried out in Government institutions like the Royal Aeronautical Establishment, the National Physical Laboratory and the National Gas Turbine Establishment. Some of the work of these institutions is farmed out to aircraft factories, but in these cases, too, the whole cost of the work, including sometimes the provision of very expensive equipment, is borne on public funds.

In addition to this there is development and experimental work placed by contract on aircraft manufacturers, but again the full cost of the work is paid by the community. A manufacturer carrying out such a contract puts in a claim for every variation and every contingency which adds to his expenditure. Where tooling is required, the common practice is to draw up, and charge for, a separate tool schedule, and additional charges are made for every addition to the schedule. A good deal of this work is charged on a cost-plus basis.

In making this point I do not imply

\* Mr. Mikardo and his opponent Mr. Bremridge have agreed to define "aircraft industry" in this context as "the manufacture and assembly of air frames and aero-engines." Both writers are stating their own views, which are not necessarily those of any organizations with which they are connected.—EDITOR.

any criticism of the industry. Research experiment and development in this field have now become so complex and so costly that nobody could expect the industry to finance them from its own resources. And since the major part of the results of this work goes into weapons of war, it is proper that the State, as the organizer of the nation's defences, should bear the burden.

The only point I *do* make here is that the aircraft companies have virtually ceased (for whatever good reasons) to be risk-bearing enterprises, and so the first justification for private ownership does not exist in their case.

For reasons of security, information about the volume of public work and expenditure in this field remains unpublished. But notwithstanding this official secrecy it is widely known that almost all the current types which have won so much well-deserved praise have been made possible only by public enterprise and not by private enterprise. So far as I know, there is only one important aircraft type in current production which was a private venture. All the rest have been sustained from conception through birth to maturity by public funds. The *Comet* was hailed by some imaginative advertisers as a triumph for private enterprise, but the fact is that, of the four million pounds or so that the first *Comet* cost, not a single penny came from private investment. If it had been left to private enterprise, the *Comet*—or any (except one) of the other new British types—would never have existed.

In aircraft, therefore, it is not the private investor who is finding the risk capital, and it follows that in this industry the first and most important justification of private enterprise does not exist.

One may put the point another way

by recording that in the aircraft industry the subscribed capital of the companies in the industry represents only a tiny fraction of the actual capital employed in their operations. Every shareholder is therefore receiving a return not merely on the money he has himself put up but also on a much larger amount of money put up by the taxpayer. His profits are much greater than he could command for his own outlay, and he is protected by the taxpayers against any danger of loss. The taxpayer gets the kicks and the shareholder gets the ha'pence. This is not private enterprise: it is private profit from public enterprise. And there seems to be no reason why the public, having taken the risks of public enterprise, should give away the resultant profits.

The second pillar of the classic case for private ownership is that competition enforces efficiency, and that as a last sanction the incurably inefficient firm will be forced into bankruptcy. Again this conception has no practical validity in respect of the aircraft industry.

Even if it could be established that aircraft and aero-engine manufacture were superbly efficient, I should not accept that that fact would represent anything like a complete case against their transfer to public ownership. The general case for public ownership rests on many considerations of social justice and overall national policy unconnected with the circumstances of any particular industry, and I cannot see why any patriot should demand that the community should load upon itself the burden of the inefficient industries and leave the joys of the efficient ones to the private entrepreneur. But, as a matter of fact, the aircraft industry is far from efficient in its manufacturing function.

Where the British aircraft industry

## SHOULD THE AIRCRAFT INDUSTRY BE NATIONALIZED ?

excels is in the functions of research, design and development. Up to the stage of the completion of the prototype we are the best in the world. During part of even this process we waste a good deal of scarce and highly skilled manpower, because up to the stage of the acceptance of a tender there is a considerable volume of overlapping work done in competing establishments, and often a project team is spending a great deal of effort in one design department in trying to solve a problem to which a solution has already been found (and kept secret) in another design department. After a tender has been accepted there is a considerable pooling of knowledge—organized not by the manufacturers but by official bodies—but before that stage there is a great waste of the work of some of the best brains in the industry.

However, it is after the aerodynamicists, the designers and the stressmen have finished their work, and the job has to be "productionized" (as the hideous jargon has it), that the great drop in efficiency occurs. The next stages take far too long. Mr. Chester Wilmot has recorded that "the period that elapsed between the first prototype flight of the *Swift* jet-fighter and the first equipment of a squadron with these machines was twenty-one months. The corresponding period for the American F-86 and the Russian MIG-15 was fifteen months. The prototype *Hunter*, again, flew before the *Swift*, and yet the first production *Hunter* has not yet appeared" (*Observer*, February 15, 1953). And this, be it noted, in spite of these types having official "super-priority," whatever that may mean. "Although the supply of resources has improved," says Mr. Wilmot, "progress measured in terms of finished aircraft is still disappointing. British designers and engineers have proved their superiority

but in the translation of designs and prototypes into production aircraft British manufacturers are not always so efficient" (*ibid.*).

The reason for this situation leaps to the eye of any production engineer who comes from any other branch of manufacture into aircraft. It is simply that, with the exception of one company, the aircraft manufacturers have not organized their job as a planned production-engineering operation. The exception is a firm of electrical and general engineers which has come into aircraft manufacture rather late in life and has gone about making aeroplanes by the same methods as it made, and makes, all its other products. It has looked on the job of producing aircraft as an implementation of planning technique no different from producing motor-cars or generators or vacuum-cleaners. It hasn't been inhibited by the sentimentalized, romanticized flying mystic which began by inspiring, and ended by plaguing, the older aircraft firms.

The manufacture of aircraft was started, for the most part, by men who had a passion for aeroplanes, who designed them, and who flew them. So long as the manufacture was small-scale and leisurely, no serious consequences flowed from giving the flying and design pioneers a production job which required quite different talents and training. But when the quantities to be produced, and the capacity of the industry increased rapidly, the organization of production demanded something more than love of aircraft and the ability to design them. Unfortunately the recognition of this fact came all too slowly, and it took too long for the pure production engineers, who may never have left the ground but who did know how to feed components into an assembly-line, to come into his own.



That is why we do not use even that limited degree of rationalization, specialization and standardization which is possible in aircraft manufacture. That is also why aircraft factories do not subcontract as widely or as well as other large-scale engineering factories. And in general that is why "in the translation of designs and prototypes into production aircraft British manufacturers are not always so efficient."

One other respect in which the standards of the industry leave something to be desired is in the field of labour relations, in which the aircraft manufacturers are averagely inferior to firms in other industries, including some who compete with aircraft factories for the supply of skilled labour.

We have before our eyes a current example of the results of some of these defects. At the present time eleven aircraft types, in addition to guided missiles, are on a so-called super-priority list, but this has not prevented the development and delivery of some of them from falling well behind schedule. The *Comet II*, for example, is already some six months behind programme. Undoubtedly this situation is caused to some extent by Government policy (particularly the restrictions on capital investment and the incentive to de-stocking), but the industry itself cannot escape some share of the responsibility.

Defenders of private enterprise, as I have already said, always argue that the last sanction which keeps privately-owned industry efficient is that the incurably bad firm will slide into bankruptcy. This does not apply to the aircraft industry, because no British Government would ever permit an aircraft establishment, no matter how inefficient, to go out of production if its continuation were vital to the national interest. As a piece of his-

tory, only one aircraft firm has ever failed, and it was allowed to fail by the Ministry of Supply as a deliberate piece of policy because it was thought that its survival was not important, particularly as the one major aircraft project which it had on hand was taken over by another manufacturer. The national interest—and public money—provide in the aircraft industry a virtually total safeguard against the operation of the final sanction of classic capitalism.

The third leg of the case made for private ownership is that only private enterprisers have the expertize and the verve required for marketing in highly competitive conditions. But again this does not apply to aircraft, for the simple reason that aeroplanes are not "sold" by selling techniques but are bought against their specifications. Whenever there is a release of the details of a new type which has superior performance or economy to existing types, prospective users rush to test the claims made for it, and to purchase it if those claims are justified on investigation. In aircraft the selling is done not by the go-getting salesman but by the designer sitting quietly at his drawing-board. So long as design supremacy is maintained, marketing is no problem.

In any event, I do not know why it should be thought that publicly-owned establishments are less effective in their marketing work than any others. Certainly I have never seen any evidence produced to support this argument. Does anybody seriously argue that the sales effort of the British Overseas Aircraft Corporation is less effective than was the sales effort of Imperial Airways; and has anybody noticed any deterioration in the sales drive of Cables and Wireless since it was transferred to public ownership?



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Thus the whole of the standard case for private enterprise does not stand up when it is applied to the manufacture of aircraft and aero-engines. There remains, however, one question which is often put to those who advocate some measure of public ownership in this industry—the question whether, since the State is practically a monopoly purchaser of the industry's products, and since it is therefore in a position to exercise the closest control over the manufacturers, it cannot impose its will without an actual transfer of ownership.

This is a fair question, and it demands a serious answer. To my mind the answer is that the extent to which control can be effective without ownership is limited, and that moreover the exercise of such control must inevitably be more costly and more bureaucratic than the administration of a publicly-owned industry.

The main difficulty about public control of privately-owned industry, and the principal reason why it is inferior to public ownership, is that it is an arrangement in which the planner at the centre and the executant at the circumference are motivated by different incentives and therefore do not make a completely harmonious team. The public controller has no motive other than the national interest, whereas the manufacturer who is being controlled, even though he may patriotically bear the public interest in mind, is motivated principally by the desire to strengthen his own firm and make it more profitable. The next step is that the central planner, knowing that the industrialist has sometimes an incentive to do something different from the plan, has to set up all sorts of bureaucratic checks in an attempt to prevent his doing so.

We saw something of this in practice even during the war. In those days

the Government decided that every aircraft manufacturer should manage with as little labour (especially scarce skilled labour) as possible, but it also knew that sometimes it paid the manufacturers better, and always it was more convenient for them, to use more labour rather than less. Consequently, the Ministry of Labour had to demand periodic returns of personnel and had to put Labour Supply Officers into the factories. Thus we got a multiplication of forms and inspections—the two manifestations of bureaucracy which are most strongly resented.

The same applied to the use of materials. There were periods when the material controls, especially the Light Alloy Control, were anxious that manufacturers should give up their surplus stocks. But they knew that the manufacturers had an incentive to hold stocks, partly out of convenience and partly because their value was rising. And therefore they, too, got a lot of forms filled up and sent a lot of inspectors round.

All this is a special application of the general problem of governmental administration. Governments are often in the position of having to pass laws and make regulations which some of their citizens will have an incentive to cheat, and that is why they have to set up an inspectorate and a police force to guard against the cheating. That is often inevitable—but it is clearly much better, wherever it is possible, to have a situation in which people have no incentive to cheat the regulations, because then you need no policemen to watch them.

That is the situation in public ownership. The manager of a publicly-owned factory, free from the pressure to increase the dividends which his company has to declare at the next annual general meeting, has no incen-

tive to hold more labour or materials than he needs, or to keep his discoveries secret, because there is no profit for his establishment in doing so.

The hard fact is that in practice, even with all the powers of a near-monopoly purchaser, governments have found it difficult to get the industry to do what they have wanted. They have found it just as complicated to control prices as to control labour and materials, and there is no doubt that some of the prices paid out of public funds to the aircraft manufacturers have been unduly high. Moreover, it has been found impossible to prevent this completely by any organization of cost-checking.

Again, those successive governments have been most anxious, on strategic grounds, for the industry to disperse its capacity, but the industry has nevertheless resisted the demands of

dispersal with a remarkable degree of success.

This is an industry which lends itself readily and easily to a conversion to public ownership. We should need to take over no more than a dozen firms, and I have no doubt that these could be operated just as effectively as the one aircraft firm which has been in public ownership for about ten years. Having these major firms under a single ownership would lead to great savings through making possible a large degree of rationalization and integration, particularly in "productionalization" and production.

This industry is vital to the nation, both strategically and commercially. We cannot afford to have its technical development impeded by a slavish adherence to doctrinaire private enterprise.

IAN MIKARDO.

## SHOULD THE AIRCRAFT INDUSTRY BE NATIONALIZED? NO

By PHILIP BREMRIDGE

AS I understand it, the question is not "What is wrong with the aircraft industry?" with the corollary "What shall we do to put it right?" but "Has not the time come when the aircraft industry should pass into public ownership?" and it is therefore to the latter question that I shall direct my reply.

Whether one regards the industry primarily as a consumer goods producer (if one is thinking of armaments)

or as a capital goods producer, more for export than for indigenous investment (if one takes a long-term view and is an optimist) there is surely one over-riding criterion by which its products will be judged by its potential customers: quality. Quality means ingenuity in design, excellence in craftsmanship, superlatives in performance. In the commercial field, when aircraft are being built and bought for a useful life of ten years or more, each one to carry

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in that period perhaps half a million passengers some fifteen million miles, quality is the paramount requirement. The quality of our airliners therefore will determine our place in the world as air transport operators and the extent to which we can grasp and hold the export market. Both activities, operation and production, can make significant contributions to our balance of payments.

In military aircraft, however, upon quality depends far more than commercial considerations. The lives of sons and husbands, and indeed the issues of a world struggle, may well hang upon these factors: ingenuity, craftsmanship, performance. In view of the ratio between the quantities that can be put into the field, or the air, by Britain and the Soviet Union, nothing will compensate for any fall in the level of quality.

Production rates, whether sufficient to secure export orders or to replace losses in battles, are important too; but the problem of production is largely one of manpower, and is to a great extent independent of whether or not the industry is owned and controlled by the State. Even if Government finance and direction of labour could boost the production rates, it would avail little unless quality was maintained.

It was Mr. Herbert Morrison who said in a nationalization debate in 1946: "It is up to the nationalizers to prove their case, that there will be public advantage by nationalization." First, then, they must prove, not merely that public ownership will maintain the quality for which British aircraft constructors have been famous for years, but that it will improve quality, at the same time raising output without raising costs. That is quite a job for a Party which has not yet decided what particular brand of nationalization is most suitable!

It is not enough for the nationalizers

to say we have designed the finest aeroplanes in the world, but that only Government intervention can get them built in time to secure and hold the export market. The nationalizers want to have their cake and eat it. They rely on the aircraft industry in its present state to design the machines and they then want the credit for the production. But what about the next generation of aircraft? What guarantee have we that a nationalized industry will design a *Comet IV* or transport versions of the *Valiant*, *Vulcan* or *Victor* which will be superior to their American counterparts, or that having designed them they will lay down production lines of the right numbers of the right types?

As an industrial group the aircraft industry is quite unique. It started a few years before the first world war as a handful of enthusiastic amateurs bent on defying the law of gravity, bent on emulating and surpassing the feats of the American Wright brothers and Frenchmen such as Louis Blériot and Maurice Farman. Forty years ago the Short brothers on Sheppey, Handley Page at Cricklewood, Geoffrey de Havilland at Farnborough, T. O. M. Sopwith and A. V. Roe at Brooklands—to mention only a few of the pioneers—spent hour after hour in their borrowed or hired sheds constructing contraptions which, if they were lucky, kept them airborne for a few minutes at a time. These names are to be found today at the head of great Corporations with millions of pounds capital, employing scores of thousands of the most highly skilled technicians and engineers in Britain.

It is the spirit of those early days of competition and rivalry which has continued to imbue the industry throughout these long and always difficult years, and which has given it much of its still unique character. Whatever the degree of secrecy, however keen the research of

the individual companies, attractive as the blandishments are which still cause the top-flight technicians to leave their employers for other patrons, once a contract has been landed they all help each other to get the order fulfilled.

By the time the first war broke out in 1914, it is probably fair to say they had just about mastered the art of getting aloft, engine willing, of staying aloft and, engine unwilling—which was more frequent—of landing again without serious personal injury. Flying was then regarded almost exclusively as a sport. True there were some, like Lord Northcliffe of the *Daily Mail* who, seeing the commercial opportunities of aviation, promoted mail-carrying flights and other ventures. Others with vision, such as a certain Major Trenchard, saw and forced upon the War Office its military potential. With the outbreak of war the aeroplane became a weapon. Competition between the pioneers was intense, particularly as by this time the Government, in the form of the Royal Aircraft Factory, Farnborough, had entered the lists with their variants of the French prototypes, such as the *Blériot Experimental* and *Farman Experimental*. By the end of the war Farnborough was not merely building its own aeroplanes, at considerable expense compared with the costs of the private companies, but was also responsible for the orders placed for the latter's products. After vigorous campaigning by a number of M.P.s a Select Committee (The Burbidge Committee) was set up to consider the terms of reference for "The Factory," as it was called. Said Mr. Pemberton-Billing, M.P. for East Herts: "the officials who were responsible for deciding types of machines . . . failed either by ignorance, intrigue or incompetence to provide the best machines the country could produce." As a result of the Select Committee's report Farnborough gave up manufac-

ture and reverted to its original role of being an experimental, research and testing organization, both on behalf of the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force as customers, and of the industry as producers. The Royal Aircraft Experimental Establishment, still at Farnborough, continues to-day to render the same important services to State and industry alike.

In the 1920s and 1930s it was the most fierce though friendly competition and rivalry which drove the industry towards its goal of quality. World records for speed, height and range were constantly being made and broken, and in these efforts first one then another British manufacturer figured prominently. While the Air Ministry, on behalf of both its own Service and the Royal Navy, issued specifications and invited tenders, as often as not it was the manufacturers who designed, built, tested and offered their own private ventures. In all, between the wars some two hundred P.V.'s were built and flown. Amongst the most notable of the successes were the Fairey *Swordfish*, Hawker *Hurricane*, Vickers-Supermarine *Spitfire* and the Bristol *Britain First*. The *Swordfish* torpedo bomber came into service with the Fleet Air Arm in 1935 and was in service and fully operational throughout the war. It was designed and built entirely at the risk of the Fairey Company, because Mr. (now Sir Richard) Fairey felt in his bones that this was the sort of aeroplane the Navy needed. On another occasion I was concerned myself with the prototype drawings for a new naval bomber, but our tender was rejected, not because it lacked promise, but simply because our competitors had submitted not a model and drawings as we had done, according to instructions, but a complete aircraft.

The *Hurricane* and *Spitfire* stories are both too familiar to need any comment

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here, but it is salutary to reflect where we might have been in 1940 if the Hawker and Vickers Companies had not chanced their arms. In the case of the *Hurricane*, so confident was the Hawker Company that their product was going to be ordered that they even laid down a production line before the order came through.

The *Britain First* was ordered by Lord Rothermere to back his judgment of what he reckoned the Royal Air Force would need as a bomber. The original aeroplane was built as a passenger aircraft and first flew in 1935. By 1937 the first squadrons of R.A.F. Blenheims, almost identical machines, and derived directly from the Rothermere prototype, were in operational training. In September, 1939, they were in action.

But the failures amongst these P.Vs. were as important as the successes. From their performance and from their shortcomings, thanks to the brilliance of the test pilots, new lessons were learnt and further progress was made towards the always elusive goal. It is true that when a firm lost a contract, if they were lucky, they received a sub-contract from their more fortunate rival. At one time in the middle 'thirties a particular bomber (the Hawker *Hart*) was being built under sub-contract by no fewer than six of our leading constructors. Ten variants of the type were in use by the Royal Air Force and a further six variants carried the distinguishing roundels of foreign countries.

When responsible politicians talk to-day of "fleeting opportunities" with reference to our present lead with jets they should recall that in 1937-38 twenty-nine foreign air forces and navies were flying British aircraft. Even since the war one British manufacturer has sold a certain type of small airliner (the de Havilland *Dove*) to twenty-six different foreign countries, including the U.S.A. and a freighter built by the

Bristol Aeroplane Company has been sold to no fewer than seventeen foreign air lines.

It was due to no failure on the part of the British aircraft industry that in 1945 we had no modern airliner in production and that we have had a restricted market for our products during the last seven years. It was a deliberate act of policy that during the war Britain should concentrate on bombers and fighters to the exclusion of transports. This position was not sought by the industry, but accepted by the manufacturers as a Government decision. Now that we have taken up the slack, there is no reason to suppose that America is necessarily going to keep her export market for transports, nor need it be feared that she will win it back again so long as the British constructors are not hedged about with Ministerial control and Treasury sanctions, and deflected from their goal.

Against the criterion of quality it is difficult to visualize the advantages to be derived from public ownership. At present the R.A.E. at Farnborough, apart from its testing function, carries out valuable basic aeronautical research; so do the Universities; so do the manufacturers themselves. Only this month the £40 million Hawker-Siddeley Company announced that they were setting up their own guided missile research station in South Australia to carry out investigations independently of the British Government's establishment at Woomera. That is enterprise. The point is that the manufacturer may want to pursue an idea of his own which, at the moment, he cannot persuade Farnborough to accept. That sort of thing could never happen under any form of public ownership.

Air Commodore Whittle was not the only man before the war to be thinking about jet propulsion. Farnborough had ideas, too, but Whittle had a particular



conception, technically described as a "centrifugal compressor." Farnborough put their faith in an "axial turbine compressor." Whittle, by the drive of his dynamic personality, got himself released from R.A.F. duty to form a private company "Power Jets Ltd." While Farnborough continued to work on their theory, the Metropolitan Vickers Company built the Whittle Jet, and the Gloster Aircraft Company, a fighter fuselage to receive it. The combination of Whittle's initiative and the existence of a free enterprise aircraft industry gave Britain the *Meteor* and *Vampire* years before the axial compressor jet became a practical proposition. That sort of thing could never happen under any form of public ownership.

Here is another example. Shortly after the war the R.A.F. wanted a jet trainer. De Havillands offered a *Vampire*, single-engined, but with side-by-side seating for the instructor and pupil. Glosters offered a *Meteor*, twin-engined, the instructor sitting behind the pupil. Glosters received the contract; de Havillands were turned down. So certain were de Havillands that the *Vampire* trainer would be wanted that they built one as a P.V. ostensibly to offer to foreign air forces. To-day one of the de Havilland factories has line after line, row after row, of *Vampire* trainers—for the R.A.F. and for export. That sort of thing could never happen under any form of public ownership.

To-day we have under construction two totally different types of interceptor fighter, the Hawker *Hunter* and the Vickers-Supermarine *Swift*. Each was designed in the utmost secrecy. Each has particular characteristics which the other has not. One may be better than the other, but I do not know which; nor will anyone know until both are tested under actual service conditions. It was the competition between the two

companies which called for every ounce of endeavour from every man in each of the two design teams. Then again we have the Vickers *Valiant* swept-wing, the Avro *Vulcan* delta-wing, and the Handley Page *Victor* crescent-wing bombers. It is no more possible to say to-day which will be the most successful than it was in 1937 to say which of the Avro *Manchester*, Handley Page *Halifax* or Short *Stirling* would prove the most successful wartime bomber. In fact it turned out to be none of these, but the *Lancaster*, which itself was not an original conception, but the result of second thoughts about the twin-engined *Manchester* prototype. Under public ownership it is inconceivable either that one would get the concentrated application of the individual technicians and craftsmen or that one would even be sure the Government design team had produced the best that existing knowledge and ingenuity could devise.

If it is argued that under nationalization it would still be possible to have more than one design team working on a given requirement, the question arises, how does one chief designer persuade a promising man to leave another chief designer to join his staff? That sort of thing could not happen under any form of public ownership.

Apart from these arguments—which, though practical problems, are perhaps hypothetical at the present moment—there is one very serious aspect of the present controversy. For some time now U.S. aircraft companies have been combing Britain for draughtsmen and stressmen, and offering very attractive inducements to the best of our young technicians to fly the Atlantic. There can be nothing more likely to weaken the attachment to their home industry of these young men than the uncertainty of a threat of nationalization, the very form of which remains nebulous.

What is this nationalization talk all



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about? Is it the further extension of the public ownership of all means of production, distribution and exchange; or do the nationalizers see a real danger which only public ownership of the aircraft industry can avert? Certainly the electorate is more likely to pay attention to the latter than the former.

Is it a vital question of finance for production? Is the industry's standing so low that the City will not back the designers of, say, the *Comet* or the *Britannia*, or are we all so overtaxed that there is not the capital available in private hands to invest? If the last is the case, then we must prepare ourselves for further drastic taxation to enable the State to find the money to invest in the industry. Suppose there is an element of truth in the theory that private capital is difficult to attract; does it really mean that to crack this nut we have to use the sledge-hammer of nationalization? Lord Pakenham, one-time Conservative research worker, Socialist Minister of Civil Aviation and First Lord of the Admiralty, in a debate in the House of Lords last month, threatened the industry with revolutionary and drastic "solutions" if we were to miss this "fleeting opportunity to collar the jet market," through not having the aircraft ready on the shelf. Revolutionary and drastic though the Socialist remedies might be, what evidence is there that they would be solutions? It is no good having aeroplanes on the shelf if they do not happen to be the ones the customers want. Let us suppose the Socialist Government in 1949, shortly after the first flight of the *Comet I* prototype, had been in a position to order some for the shelf, how

many *Comet I*'s would they have ordered? When the range and tropical take-off limitations of the *Comet I* showed the need for a more powerful *Comet* with new engines, how many *Comet II*'s would the Government have ordered? Who is there to-day prepared to gauge the size of an order on behalf of the taxpayers for Vickers *Viscounts*? And if he can be found, how many of the medium-range forty-eight-seaters and how many of the new short-range eighty-two-seaters does he think ought to be put on the shelf, or even in the window?

Nationalization, of itself, is not suddenly going to imbue any Civil Servant, or roped-in industrialist, with the gift of being able to put his hand in a bag and pull out the right number.

If there is a need for a modest priming of the pump, there may be occasions when, with adequate safeguards and guarantees on both sides, the Treasury, backed by the Ministry of Supply experts, may be able to come to terms with a manufacturer over a financial arrangement to enable the forward buying of limited quantities of materials; but it does not need nationalization to do that.

Let us come back always to test any demand for public ownership by the only criterion which will ensure that a commercial product finds a purchaser and that a military one reaches its goal: quality. If any demagogue can convince the country that nationalization will produce a better aeroplane than can be produced by this "Topsy" of an industry, then we shall deserve all that such gullibility would warrant.

PHILIP BREMRIDGE.

# EASTERN STRAINS AND WESTERN STRENGTH

By DENYS SMITH

THE death of Stalin occurred while Mr. Eden and Mr. Butler were in Washington. It distracted public attention from their discussions and at the same time provided a new topic for them. Any event which opened up such vast possibilities of change in the world had naturally a more dramatic appeal than the humdrum and intricate question of expanding trade and freeing currencies, even though the eventual impact of the latter on the everyday life of the ordinary individual might be far greater. Stalin's death, in fact, made the economic discussions more important and valuable than they would otherwise have been. The unity of the Russian Empire was shaken and subject to new strain at a time when the two British Ministers were presenting a comprehensive plan to restore economic unity to the free world. Whatever may happen in Russia there is likely to be a pause before it does happen. More time has thus been provided to study and pursue the Commonwealth programme for freeing trade and currency exchange and for substituting trade for aid.

The Russian party machinery, the secret police and the army can be inherited by Malenkov and his associates. But Stalin's prestige, as Mr. Dulles pointed out, cannot be inherited. This means that while the Russian State will continue to present to the world as monolithic an appearance as before, the bonds between Russia and the satellites have been weakened. The allegiance of the satellites was to Stalin himself, the High Priest of Communism, not to any subordinate

Sanhedrin. The satellites had been marked as a target of American psychological pressure even before Stalin's death. They present an even more profitable target now.

Mr. Dulles also noted that a change of régimes in Russia and the United States had come at about the same time. This idea can be expanded. In Russia the change from Stalin to Malenkov has placed new difficulties in the way of Communist unity. In the United States the change from President Truman to President Eisenhower has presented new opportunities for consolidating national unity in America and for co-operation in the Western world. In Russia the change was from the known to the unknown, to a man who has still to build his legend. In the United States, without in any way wishing to minimize the prestige and popularity of Mr. Truman in certain sections of the country, it might be said that the change was in the other direction; it was at least a change to a man whose "legend" was firmly established and who is very far from being an unknown quantity.

Mr. Dulles might have pointed to yet another parallel. Hitler and President Roosevelt also came to power at about the same time. The world then, as now, was struggling to get back to economic stability. Each country was striving by individual national policies to struggle free, with little success, from the bog of the great depression. A united effort on a world scale was needed, but the opportunity was missed at the London Economic Conference. It was always the contention of Mr.

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Roosevelt's Secretary of State, Mr. Cordell Hull, that if his policies had been adopted by the Administration so that the London Economic Conference could have been a success, the rise of aggressive Nazism and the World War itself would have been prevented. Instead of economic co-operation the United States introduced a new element of economic instability into the world by devaluing the dollar. It was not until 1936, when a tripartite monetary agreement was reached with Britain and France, followed in 1938 by a trade agreement with Britain, that the United States could be said to have returned to the path of economic co-operation. But then it was too late.

Once again European statesmen are following in the footsteps of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, M. Herriot, Signor Guido Jung, Dr. Hjalmar Schacht and others who trekked hopefully to the White House in 1933 to discuss economic co-operation. If Mr. Eden and Mr. Butler, who are being followed by M. Mayer and Herr Adenauer, are to be no more successful than their predecessors of twenty years ago, then history suggests that the only man who can be thankful is Malenkov.

Both Mr. Eisenhower and Mr. Eden, when discussing the effect of Stalin's death in Washington, agreed that the future course of the West would be largely controlled by the attitude of Russia, over which they had no influence. But there is some truth in the reverse statement, that the capacity of Russia for harm will be largely determined by the attitude of the West, particularly in the economic field. To reach any tolerable accommodation with Russia, it has often been said, the West must negotiate from strength. Strength implies not only military power in being, but a solid economic base on which it can be established. One characteristic of Stalin's policy was its

constancy. It was designed to extend by all and any means the Communist revolution throughout the world ; but whenever it appeared that further progress along any particular line would lead to war Stalin drew back. He accepted defeat in Berlin after the Berlin air-lift and in Greece after American aid and support was voted by Congress. Korea might be regarded as an exception, but even there Russian caution and subterfuge were more manifest than Russian rashness in the methods chosen to assist the Communist forces. Stalin's caution has sometimes been attributed to his basically peasant mentality, sometimes to his fear of American atomic supremacy, but more often to his knowledge and appreciation of American industrial strength, about which he learned at first hand during the War. It may well have been the economic preponderance of the West which preserved the peace.

Malenkov may not be as impressed as Stalin by this factor. He may not, for the sake of his own prestige, be able to reverse any policy once started. He may wish to emulate Stalin and further expand the bounds of Russian influence. He certainly will not wish to preside over the liquidation of Stalin's empire. Yet the United States cannot agree to Stalin's territorial acquisitions, to the perpetual enslavement of free peoples. The present Administration is opposed to a policy of mere containment, to any programme of co-existence based on recognition of present Russian spheres of influence. There are dangerous elements of conflict here, but at least it can be said that they will be less dangerous if the economic strength of the West is increased instead of diminished. And it will certainly take a more obvious industrial and economic disparity between the free and Communist worlds to impress Malenkov than that which apparently impressed Stalin.

The American survey of the post-Stalin world begins with the dismissal of any chance of a sudden or violent upheaval inside the Russian State. But it sees a possibility of political and doctrinal schism in the Communist world beyond Russian borders. Stalin's empire consisted of the solid Russian core surrounded by a group of satellites retaining their political, economic and cultural identities, their local prides and resentments and, most important of all, their local leaders. Was it an error from the Russian point of view not to have incorporated them into the Russian State? The answer is believed to be that Russia had no choice in the matter. Stalin deliberately adopted a policy of insulating Russia from whatever tendencies to deviation or discontent might exist or might arise in the satellite countries. Despite purges and pressure he felt uncertain about the effects of incorporation on the Russian people themselves.

Stalin's prestige outside the Russian State has been compared to the mortar which bound the Iron Curtain countries together. He was accepted throughout the Communist world as the sole and unchallengeable authority on orthodox Communist doctrine. The mortar has been weakened by his death. But the weakness of mortar in any structure is significant only in terms of the strains to which it is subjected. If there are no strains the mere weight of the bricks will hold the structure together. Far less pressure will now be needed than before to break down the outer wall of the Soviet empire. The strains may even come from within, for past Russian policy amounted to a confession that they existed. But the United States will also redouble its efforts to stimulate and encourage them, without of course urging outright and premature revolt by the captive peoples. Stalin's death

may also alter the relationship between Russia and China. General Mao, who may regard himself as the senior Marxist leader now that Stalin is dead, might not be so ready to play second fiddle to Malenkov or permit himself to be influenced by Russian policy. It may weaken the drive and intensity of the Communist effort to stir up trouble in the Middle East. It may mean less obedience from the Communist leaders in the Western nations themselves. All this is obscure. It demands that attitude of "definite watchfulness" for which Mr. Eisenhower asked. It is more profitable to turn one's attention to what the Western world can do than to what the Communist world may do.

We speak of the Western world and contrast it with the Communist world, but the term Western world is still largely an expression of hope and not a reflection of fact. This is particularly true on the economic side where the sterling and dollar areas continue to revolve in their separate orbits. Mr. Eden and Mr. Butler came to Washington with their imposing array of advisers (enough knights for a thousand and one Arabians, someone remarked) to try and change this and to achieve in time that additional strength which will come from fusion. The most significant aspect of their visit was that they assumed the position of leadership. They were the spokesmen for a plan world-wide in scope which had been approved by the whole Commonwealth; they represented the sterling area system which finances half the world's trade. They had a plan to present which was along American lines of thought, but not so far along American lines of action. Since the War the United States has set as its economic goal the restoration of that golden age before the First World War when trade was reasonably balanced and free, and

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currencies stable and interchangeable. It has always been ready with its little lectures to foreign countries on what they should do to check inflation, adopt sound financial policies, and so produce goods at competitive rates. It has bemoaned the failure of other countries to earn their way by doing this and the necessity of covering trade deficits with American aid. But it has always been able to put off supplying the cart on the grounds that other countries had not yet produced the horse—the horse being sound internal policies, the cart, reduced obstacles to trade. The extent to which a change of Government in Britain had meant a change in domestic policies had not fully penetrated. The American officials who dealt with the British delegation were startled by their ready admission that the importance of internal policies had not been properly recognized in the past throughout the Commonwealth. They were taken aback by their agreement that the extent of the economic crisis of 1951 was due to the fact that home policies and foreign economic policies had been treated as distinct matters with little influence upon each other. Before the Americans had time to say "What bunk!" the British had said it for them!

The Americans were suddenly aware that they had been knocking at an open door. As long as the door was shut there was good reason for their not advancing. Now the excuse has been removed they appear to be a trifle confused by the new type of muscular activity required—a forward movement with the legs, not a windmill movement of the arms. Their British guests told them, "We can check inflation, produce well, but this is hopeless unless sound creditor policies are encountered. You talk about

sound internal conditions, but we cannot maintain and improve these unless the external policies of debtor and creditor alike are correct." In practical terms sound American creditor policies mean a further reduction of tariffs and simplifying customs procedures. They mean ending the "Buy American" Acts, a less protectionist policy for American shipping, including the removal of the provision that half the goods financed by aid programmes must be carried by American ships, and an opportunity for foreign shipping to compete with American ships in coastal trade. (Even the run from San Francisco to Hawaii, about 2,400 miles, is regarded as coastal trade.) They mean a change in the policy of restoring tariff reductions whenever they have proved their value, some form of assurance that markets for British goods, once developed, will not be suddenly cancelled. Sound creditor policies mean, too, more foreign investment, whether public or private, and the conduct of any stockpiling programme for raw materials in such a way that stability of price and volume is not adversely affected. Finally, they mean American support for a more active and less legalistic view of its duties by the Monetary Fund or, as an alternative, an independent American stabilization fund to support sterling exchange rates.

The British visitors gave the new Administration much to mull over. Considering the fact that it has not yet shaken down and is still in a somewhat chaotic condition, we must view its request for three months or so for the mulling-over process as reasonable enough. We can now wait hopefully, if not too optimistically, for the outcome.

DENYS SMITH.



# BUT LEFTWARD LOOK

By RICHARD BAILEY

ONE of the penalties of belonging to a revolutionary party is that you have to keep on revolving. To stand still is to be in a false position which can only lead to reaction. Anyone who takes the trouble to study the Left-wing Press will be surprised at the number of variations on an unoriginal theme, produced by this constant desire for movement. Britain's Labour revolves relentlessly and pointlessly and its revolutions are faithfully recorded in the mass of Left-wing writing produced each month.

A former Socialist Minister is said to have come away from a Cabinet Meeting complaining that the speeches of one of his colleagues consisted, to use the phonetic spelling, of "clish after clish after clish." The *clichés* of the Left are not so much a matter of style as of principle. A Party which believes that all men are equal must have a Press manned by masters of the written "clish." Spades can only be called spades and any attempt at subtlety will result in misunderstanding which could even lead to a split in the Party (if such a thing were possible). A survey of Socialist writings over the past month shows that Labour has been dealt a great many spades.

One of the pleasantest remarks was the tribute paid by Mr. Tom O'Brien, M.P., to his "very old friend, Aneurin Bevan," at a luncheon of the American Chamber of Commerce. He said: "Nye is not anti-American, and I don't want my American friends to think that he is. But his approach to American problems and, in fact, international problems is wrong" (*Daily Herald*, February 18). It is expected that Tom and Nye will be just good friends in future.

Another devastatingly candid Labour M.P., Mr. Emrys Hughes, gave his views on his leaders in a review of Herbert Morrison's pamphlet, "Our Parliament and How it Works" in the following words (*Tribune*, February 20): "The salaries of Ministers should not greatly exceed those paid to M.Ps. If the reply is that we must pay enough to attract capable men, I should say that high salaries do not necessarily mean that we get such men. These salaries attract the pushing careerists, but what we want is people with a highly developed sense of public service and a social conscience—real Socialists in every sense of the word." Who can he mean? Pushing careerists in the Labour Party! Whatever next?

One of the most deeply worn grooves in Labour thought is the idea that history does no more than prove that all Tories are always wicked, while all Socialists are always good. It follows that all good men are Socialists. The only memories of pre-war days permitted are bitter ones. It is not so much that an objective approach is not attained, it is not even attempted. This attitude is strikingly demonstrated in the review of the H.M.S.O. pamphlet on the "Teaching of History," in the February issue of *Fact*: "There is, of course, room for more than one approach in the teaching of real modern history: many teachers prefer to treat it as 'current affairs.' The memories of the past 40 or 50 years are strong in the minds of the older generation and political viewpoints have to be considered. The difficulties that teachers can get into are shown by the fact that many people still regard the first world war in 1914 as being solely the fault of

the Germans." Except for the inexplicable failure of the author to bring in the Tolpuddle martyrs, this review is a model of its kind.

The workers by hand tend to have the best of it in the Socialist Party. There are more of them and they pay trade union dues, parts of which find their way into the funds of Labour's Party. One worker by brain writing to the Editor of *Tribune* on February 20, seems to resent this. "The possession of a University Degree or Professional Qualifications," he writes, "ought not to be a disadvantage in membership of the Labour Party, but might I suggest through your columns that if certain divisions cannot realize the difference between the Labour Party and the labourers' party it might react very much to their disadvantage at a General Election?"

Another worker by brain, an intellectual in fact, Mr. Alan Taylor, writing under the unsubtle title of "Don't be fooled by an ox-roast" in the *Daily Herald* on January 31, warns his readers of their solemn obligation to keep Left. "Keir Hardie and the other pioneers of Socialism would have been amazed to see a great Labour Party boasting that it had become a part of the traditional 'British way of life.'"

What they should be thinking about is put very clearly under the heading "Wood Green Tastes Fruits of Labour" in *London Forward* on February 7: "The borough of Wood Green was won by Labour at last May's municipal elections. The first fruits of that Labour victory can be seen by the citizens of the borough. The Tories, when in power, closed down the Civic Restaurants. The Labour Council has decided to go back into the catering business opening up at one of the Municipal Parks. Second move by the Labour Council has been to publish a resolution encouraging all employees

of the Council to join their appropriate Trade Unions. No pressure is to be applied and there will be no closed shop, but with the Council's blessing, the work of Trade Union organizers will be made much easier."

This is indeed a crowning mercy. Perhaps it would be all right for the citizens of Wood Green to roast an ox in the Civic Restaurant in the municipal park, provided, of course, that the ox belonged to the appropriate union. For oxen as well as for asses there can be no half Marx. This point is put very succinctly in a letter to the editor in the same issue of *London Forward*. The writer is worried about Socialist Policy. "Herbert Morrison," he writes, "has asserted that there can be no rigid Labour Party policy. This is stupefying. Policy for the Labour Party can be nothing but rigid." What was that line about losing our chains? Herbert Morrison probably finds the idea stupefying too.

Anyone who thinks that the Left Press is dull is forgetting the great variety of shades of opinion that it covers. Three examples must suffice to demonstrate this. First the tub-thumping sentimentalists represented by a writer known as "Man of the People," who produced the following outburst on Sunday, March 8, in *The People*:

"How can we exploit this heaven-sent moment to get over to the Russian people the sincerity of our desire to be their comrades? We know now that such simple sentiments need no Great Leader to express them. We have had enough of Führers and Generalissimos. From now on, let nations speak unto nations through the millions of little people." Ring up the Iron Curtain, comrades! Imbecility knows no frontiers.

The second example is by that advanced journalist-politician, Mr. Tom Driberg, M.P., who has a weekly

column in *Reynolds News*. This columnist is renowned for the skill with which he castigates ideas or policies. On March 8, in criticizing the way in which other journals had dealt with the death of Stalin, he produced the following mysterious passage :

"On the whole, the more serious newspapers treated Stalin's death as it deserved to be treated. Some of the others descended to unprecedented depths of vulgarity and gloating spite. The writers of such obituaries failed to denigrate one who, for all his faults, had qualities of greatness that even Churchill has recognized : they merely exposed themselves as tinny little men incapable of appreciating a moment of awe in history."

The question is why are they "tinny little men." Is this meant as a contrast with the "man of Steel" ? Or did some worker by hand slip in an "n" too many ? We shall probably never know.

Finally, a small notice from the *Da. Herald* shows that while keeping Left, the Left Press does not neglect the odious business of capitalism. In the "Spotlight on City Column" on February 4 was the announcement : "The *Daily Herald* Investment Advice Bureau advises on all money problems. Send queries with stamped addressed envelope to the above address." Someone must have found out about those "meaningless symbols." It must be hard to keep Left all the time.

RICHARD BAILEY.

## FIFTY YEARS AGO

THE following passage is taken from an article in the *National Review*, April, 1902 :

One may ask . . . what are the attributes of the actor ? How can anyone know whether to adopt the stage as a profession or not ? I suppose there is no calling that asks so many perfections. Personal appearance, which next to that magic called "magnetism" is the first thing to look for ; an excellent education, a fine voice, grace of manner, a sense of humour (oh ! look for that in every corner of your being), a strong constitution, a capacity for grappling with every difficulty, a courage to face the bitterest disappointments, and a knowledge of men and women off the stage, for till success is reached, and very often then, an actor's life unfortunately is, and must be, a clever all-day show. These are the attributes, and at once I hear the eager aspirant for Thespian honours say : "Is Mr. So-and-So such a fine fellow to look at that Bassano's *English Types of Beauty* fade into insignificance ? Voice ! Good

Heavens ! Has the great Mr. Smith got a voice ? Sense of humour ? Would the successful Mr. What's-his-name display himself as a Roman lictor if he possessed a particle of it ? Grace of manner ? Has the great Mr. Jones got it ?" And so on. No ! I do not say any of them have any of these things in a superlative degree, far from it perhaps, but then they are successful because they have the one great quality which can dispense with *every* attribute—"magnetism." Be possessed of that *only* and you can afford to forget all the rest. Be without it and you may earn a living as long as your youth and good looks are with you, but when they are fleeting you will sorrowfully discover that the more lines you get on your face, the less you will find in the parts that are given you. . . .

The author was Ellaline Terriss, and her words are an admonition to those who waste their own time and other people's money striving to develop a faculty which they do not possess.

# BOOKS NEW AND OLD

## CRITICS AND COUNTRIES\*

By ERIC GILLETT

SIR DESMOND MACCARTHY'S death was a real blow to English criticism, because it removed the one man of letters whose opinions were known to be unbiassed and valuable and were recognized as such in all the corners of the literary world. In the happy days when Sir Walter Raleigh at Oxford and Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch at Cambridge were expounding the fact that appreciation is the first duty of the critic, this view was widely accepted. It seems to have been largely replaced to-day by a school of critics which delights in petty, clever-clever analyses. Professors of the arts of niggling depreciation are more highly regarded than exponents of appreciation. The reason for this is not hard to find. It is comparatively easy to be an expert, so called, on any one subject. This applies to the various literary forms as strongly as it does to any other branch of life, and there are numerous critics able to give the most detailed and exact information about comparatively obscure and unimportant writers. The trouble is that they are so often unable to relate their heroes adequately to their contemporaries and their background. I cannot understand this tendency because I have "discovered" two minor writers myself and have fought, I hope successfully, against the sin of over-estimating their importance.

Desmond MacCarthy was always able to do this, but he was never afraid to praise his discoveries. I can remember the wise and judicious praise he gave

to Mr. Martyn Skinner for his admirable poems, the *Letters to Malaya*. Indeed, I believe that MacCarthy was always good when he wrote about living writers, and most unusually for a critic, excelled in his judgments of writers who were personally known to him. He never wrote anything better than the essays on Samuel Butler. In *Memories*, the latest volume of his collected essays, Mr. Robert Kee has printed studies mostly of twentieth century writers. They justify Mr. Mortimer's prefatory comment that when MacCarthy died, "we lost the the best of contemporary critics." His knowledge and appreciation were so broad, so sane, so lacking in prejudice and so uncoloured by the fashion of the moment. His own style is so natural and unaffected that it goes into the category of "timeless" prose.

\* *Memories*. By Desmond MacCarthy. MacGibbon & Kee. 16s.

*The Bronte Story*. By Margaret Lane. Illustrated by Joan Hassall. Heinemann. 21s.

*The Sudden View*. By Sybille Bedford. Gollancz. 18s.

*Rome and a Villa*. By Eleanor Clark. Drawings by Eugene Berman. Michael Joseph. 21s.

*Together We Wandered*. By C. J. Lambert. Chatto & Windus. 16s.

*The Thomas Cook Story*. By John Pudney. Michael Joseph. 15s.

*Normandy and Brittany*. By Ralph Dutton. Batsford. 18s.

*The Channel Shore*. By Aubrey de Selincourt. Hale. 18s.

*Picture*. By Lillian Ross. Gollancz. 16s.

Although he often worked against time to produce his weekly output, these pieces have not a trace of haste or carelessness about them. And yet I can remember MacCarthy frequently coming in to dine, late in the week, at a club, of which we were both members, carrying three or four books, heavily marked with large slips of paper, and discussing them and his dinner with great zest and complete impartiality. On these occasions he was properly unsociable—about the only times in his life that he ever was. Although I think that he disliked speaking in public he could be admirable if the event moved him, as on Sir Max Beerbohm's seventieth birthday when the members of the Maximilian Society offered him a present, and MacCarthy spoke for us. His voice had great charm and sincerity and the hero of the day was naturally beguiled when he heard:

Then, although every leader of taste admired your elegantly unspontaneous essays, there was already in them something disconcerting to the more luxuriously confident of nineteenth-century aesthetes. I wonder if a remark which Wilde made about you ever reached your ears: "The gods," he said, "bestowed on Max the gift of perpetual old age." At the time, in your twenties, this jibe might possibly have made you a little uneasy—for a little while.

The explanation of it is that you could not be silly even about Art or Oscar. Now the chief—perhaps the only—distinctive virtue of old age is an inclination towards tolerance; when that inclination is combined with the fastidiousness of youth—well, then, we get a "Max."

That is true and charming, and one may read again these papers and almost everything else that MacCarthy wrote through the years, and his output was considerable, and find that it is almost

always just and illuminating. He would often say that he was idle and that it would be impossible for him to write a book. The fact is that he was working perpetually and that he was a writer who could only write in order to satisfy an immediate demand. There are many like him, but very few of his quality. He refused to be stampeded by "Bloomsbury" or by any other coterie. He resisted again and again the silly idea, always current among intellectual snobs, that because a writer is popular, he cannot be good. In 1934 MacCarthy was writing about Mr. Maugham:

Novelists may be said to enjoy a first-rate prestige when their works both delight the many and satisfy the discriminating few. Some have attained it by first impressing the few; others by first capturing the many. I have noticed that reputations which spread outwards from a narrow circle tend to die away at the centre as their circumference widens; so suspicious are the few of contemporary success. "Can we have been right?" they ask themselves. "Why, he's popular!" It is safer, and also perhaps a surer guarantee of lasting prestige, to conquer the big common world first, as Dickens and Balzac did, and afterwards to win the reluctant admiration of those who regard themselves as bestowing real fame, and whose respect is indeed an absolutely necessary ingredient in it.

How wise and just this is! I should like to see the collected works of Desmond MacCarthy put into the hands of every young person who aspires to be a literary or dramatic critic. They will find in them lucidity and balance, good humour, good taste, and good writing. These things should provide a solid foundation for their own work.

Miss Margaret Lane exhibits most of these qualities in her highly readable *Bronte Story*, a book with a most useful



purpose. Miss Lane has taken the cream of Mrs. Gaskell's famous *Life* and used it as a text for her own exposition of the family mystery and history as it now stands revealed in the light of recent criticism. She has blended her own writing and Mrs. Gaskell's with skill and resource. She modestly explains that the book is intended for the general reader, not for the specialist, "who will be already familiar, perhaps, with nearly everything in it." This is not likely to be true as so much has been written and discovered in recent years that only the academic student and specialist have kept pace with all that has been found in this field. I should like to have heard Miss Lane's comments on E. F. Benson's *Charlotte Bronte*, which she ignores presumably because it contains some inaccuracies. There is plenty of shrewd comment, too. Miss Joan Hassall's illustrations are masterly. I did not imagine that the spirit of the Brontë's and of their bleak, bracing country could have been caught so well.

Mrs. Sybille Bedford's *The Sudden View* gets well under the Mexican skin. This is an enchanting book and I made a willing surrender to it. The writers on style might have some hard things to say about Mrs. Bedford, but they would not find me on their side. I was captured by her first sentence comparing the Grand Central Station, New York, to the Baths of Caracalla, and except for one or two historical pieces, dragged in almost by the ear, the book held and fascinated me. There must be something most compelling about a country which forces Europeans who write about it to do so in the most endearing and attractive terms. The extraordinary household of Mr. Dane Chandos springs to the mind, but it is not to be compared with that of the courtly, hospitable Don Otavio, whose home is



SIR DESMOND MacCARTHY.

an almost serpentless Eden, whose neighbours and relations are an entertaining and formidable collection of eccentrics. All the travels of the author and her American friend, E., are a joy. I do not suppose that Mrs. Bedford will ever again find so delicious a country to travel in or one that appeals so pertinently to her sense of humour. Her publisher must find new countries for her to write about, but I have an idea that she would contrive to be equally entertaining on either the United States or the Somaliland Protectorate. And she might prefer the climate of Somaliland. . . .

Miss Eleanor Clark is just as disarming and as civilized in *Rome and a Villa*, a polished and sympathetic study in the contemporary manner of "the eternal city in which past and present are inextricably mixed." This is not altogether an easy book to describe, though it is more of a biography than a guide book. Miss Clark is known in

America as a critic of discernment. She has a knack of vivid description, and she has the critic's ability of fastening on relevant data and presenting it in its most effective setting. I think that Desmond MacCarthy would have written a most favourable notice of this book. He might, perhaps, have quoted the paragraph on unbalanced specialists:

In every academy and rooming house there are one or two of these tragic wrecks, alcoholics of the single object: the numismatist, the fontomaniac, the expert on neo-classic door-knobs, the Mithraphile, the lifelong annotator of a mediaeval manuscript, or of the single Roman painting by an obscure English romantic, the man who tried to know the name of everything in the Forum; they are drawn, fatally, from all over the world, or turned into this after they came, and many would rather die than be dislodged. But they are no worse off than most of the foreign visitors these days.

Eugene Berman's illustrations are worthy of the learned and lively text.

Mr. and Mrs. C. J. Lambert seem to enjoy wandering about the world in a comfortable way and they manage to attract good stories and odd experiences. The strangest of them all is about the paingiving powers of Ho-Tei. Their little model of this idol was fashioned in ivory, about an inch and a half high, with a laugh of huge content on his wrinkled and lined face. He sat cross-legged upon an ivory cushion and he was dressed in a kimono covered with chrysanthemum embroidery. From the time they bought him for less than five shillings he brought them trouble, principally toothache. Until he was safe in the shop of a Bond Street art dealer, the Lamberts knew no peace. The moment he was installed there, surrounded by joss-sticks, Mrs. Lambert's toothache vanished. The author

moves rapidly and easily from country to country, and is at his best when he writes about pets and animals. When I visited the headquarters of the celebrated hunter Frank Buck, I was rather saddened by the animals who would eventually find their way into zoos all over the globe. The Lamberts found the establishment anything but tame. There were eighteen large tigers and twenty-one black leopards in low, narrow cages with bars at each end. It seemed as though they might get out at any moment. And yet the arrival of their keeper, a small brown man, calmed them down in a few seconds. The best animal in the book is the endearing orang, Murphy. *Together We Wandered* is almost worth buying for his story.

*The Thomas Cook Story*, written by Mr. John Pudney, was not commissioned by the famous travel agents. The original Cook was a gardener's boy, who was also active as wood-turner, printer, Baptist missionary, and temperance zealot. He had the idea of ordering a special train for temperance workers and that was the origin of the famous business known in every continent to-day. Thomas and his son, John-Mason Cook, were both unusual personalities and their stories are the backbone of an informative book. There are numerous anecdotes about the firm's activities, among them some remarkable correspondence from the West coast of Africa, which seems to produce the most picturesque English letter writers of our time. I do not think that the French can present any parallel.

The travel books published by Messrs. Batsford are noteworthy for their beautiful format. *Normandy and Brittany* is no exception. Well written by Mr. Ralph Dutton, with one hundred and three illustrations and three maps, it only claims to be a

reliable guide to the two provinces. In what may now be called an old-fashioned way it does this very well. The historical background is well done. The reader's attention is directed to almost anything he will want to see, but no attempt is made to cover his material wants. During the last war I had the task of preparing guides to Great Britain for forces from overseas, and I soon discovered one thing. People are much more willing to look at natural and architectural beauties when other needs have been satisfied. *Normandy and Brittany* may be commended as a sound, well-written guide. If you are looking for intimate and friendly advice, you will not find it here.

Taking as his subject for a "Regional" book *The Channel Shore*, Mr. Aubrey de Selincourt, who is a keen yachtsman as well as being a knowledgeable and graceful writer, covers the coast and surrounding country with real knowledge. He notes that the sea off Fowey can be dark, intense violet-blue. I have seen it in this rich and vivid guise often in the past. I hope that I may do so again this summer.

For lack of a better name, Miss Lillian Ross's *Picture* might be called a "documentary." The publisher alludes to it as "factual reportage of real brilliance." There is no doubt that the book coruscates with an almost dizzy brilliance. Miss Ross is one of the most searching and intrepid of the *New Yorker's* contributors. This book is dedicated to that lively organ and its contents appeared in the *New Yorker's* pages. I do not know whether the idea or inspiration for the book sprang from the editor's brain or from Miss Ross's. It is so simple, so inspired that one wonders why no one has ever thought of it before. This is the author's technique. She has taken one film, a good one, *The Red Badge of Courage*, from its beginnings until it

was released. Although she assures the reader that every word in the book is true, the book reads like an admirable but very crazy story of Hollywood life. *Picture* is terrific stuff and its author should be brought over here without fail to cover the next annual Conference of the Labour Party. There is, however, no doubt at all that they would not offer the peculiar facilities handed out by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, who delivered themselves into her hands and then allowed her to make public an incredible record of waste, incompetence and interference, resulting in a film that was allowed to slip into programmes over here, almost without publicity, earned a lot of discriminating critical praise, and did not earn money. The great Mr. Louis B. Mayer prophesied this at the outset. The director, John Huston, backed by one of M.G.M.'s viceroys, Dore Schary, were determined to make it. Mr. Mayer emerges as a comic character of the stature of Sir George Sitwell as portrayed in his eldest son's autobiography. The soul of Hollywood becomes articulate here:

"He pounded a commanding fist on his desk and looked at me. 'Let me tell you something!' he said. 'Prizes! Awards! Ribbons! We had two pictures here. An Andy Hardy picture with little Mickey Rooney, and *Ninotchka*, with Greta Garbo. *Ninotchka* got the prizes. Blue ribbons! Purple ribbons! Nine bells and seven stars! Which picture made the money? *Andy Hardy* made the money. Why? Because it won praise from the heart. No ribbons!'"

This month I should like to make a handsome award of bells, ribbons and stars to Miss Ross for one of the most amusing and devastating exposures I have read for years.

ERIC GILLETT.

# MANCUNIAN MEMOIRS \*

By IVOR BROWN

WHAT Mr. Brighouse has had includes considerable success as a dramatist, especially with one play, *Hobson's Choice*. That was a Lancashire play and it is sometimes supposed that Lancashire plays are all gloomy. Revue sketches used to pretend that "With thy feyther not cold in his grave" is a typical line. As a matter of fact *Hobson's Choice* is so rich in human comedy that, even when the play was thirty-six years old, it could take over £4,000 a week, excluding Entertainment Duty, in Blackpool. That was not due only to the presence in the cast of Wilfred Pickles. There is no nourishment in pickles unless the meat be underneath them.

Mr. Brighouse devotes some of his autobiographical jottings—for he writes in a "jottingy," easy-going style—to tours of America. Many others have been there and done that. What few others, if any, have done, is to describe the gay side of the Gaiety Theatre, Manchester, in those great days which a silly superstition claims to have been only an epoch of melancholy.

The motor-car has been a blessing to those inhabitants of our great provincial cities who hate the places and only want to escape with the greatest speed to the greatest distance. It has been a curse to the towns themselves because it has drained them of their own liveliest citizens and of the corporate life they created. I myself can remember Manchester in the days when the Brazenose Club, to which I was taken by Allan Monkhouse, contained a full society of professional men. I never met the Swan Club, of which Harold Brighouse writes with such affection, but the list of its members and visitors

suggests a delectable square of which wit, scholarship, the arts, and the cotton trade made up the corners.

Stanley Houghton figures vividly, but all too briefly, owing to his early death, in the Brighouse memoirs. It is curious that this dramatist of brilliant achievement should have been rather silent in the Swan Club—"except when, rarely, politics came up. Then he did more than wear his Liberalism like a cockade; he trumpeted it." He had, too, a sensitivity not to be found in his comedies: "the humane beauty of his *Manchester Guardian* sketches found no expression in his plays." Houghton died young of meningitis. After his success in the theatre he had retired to France, as Arnold Bennett had done, before him, to write a Lancashire novel. "The intention," says Mr. Brighouse, "was to be Lancashire's Arnold Bennett; he would of a certainty have done better than that." This seems to me an ungenerous and unjustified comment. Houghton might possibly have written a better book than *The Old Wives' Tale*, *Clayhanger*, etc., but it is extremely unlikely that he could have done so. There is surely no need to sneer at Bennett in order to give Houghton his due.

The tribute to, and criticism of, Allan Monkhouse, for long the Literary Editor of the *Manchester Guardian* as well as a dramatist and novelist, are just. "He measured others by himself: nobly he flattered the mind of the playgoer." Monkhouse had said of the theatre and its audience: "The mind will take a lot: the emotions very little." That is fatal doctrine for any

\* *What I Have Had*. By Harold Brighouse. Harrap. 12s. 6d.

playwright who seeks to please more than one per cent. of the public.

Monkhouse balanced intellect and emotion best (and so succeeded most) with a war play, *The Conquering Hero*. This was written about 1915, long before it had become fashionable to be fair to pacifists. His justice of mind was part of his coolness, his detachment. He was an unusual and, with his contempt for ordinary emotional values, an inevitably ill-rewarded contributor to the volatile and sometimes crazy world of the theatre. One woman's efforts to make that asylum a comparatively sane centre for the enjoyment of the classics, as well as the production of the moderns, have recently been well described in Mr. Rex Pogson's biography of Miss Hornimann. Mr. Brighouse now contributes a personal background to that great stirring of life in Manchester when the *Guardian*, as well as the Gaiety Theatre, were at their best and the "M.G.'s" team of dramatic critics to cope with the various challenges of a Monday night included C. E. Montague, Allan Monkhouse and G. H. Mair, with "off-staff" work being done on occasion by James Agate, Stanley Houghton and Harold Brighouse.

The "M.G." has now a much greater circulation and so a wider authority. But to those who had any contact with Manchester forty and thirty years ago, the reminders in this book of the life then lived in and around Cross Street will be precious and illuminating. All sorts of charming information emerges, e.g., that James Agate once played Bottom the Weaver in a family performance at his father's house.

Also there are necessary allusions to, or descriptions of, the two main fountains of all this Mancunian ferment, the Cotton Trade and the Manchester Grammar School. In the latter Brig-

## Salisbury

1830-1903

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Illustrated. 12s. 6d. net.

JOHN MURRAY



house "didn't seem to come on with his classics," only enduring Latin and hating Greek, unworthy of his uncle the great Edwin Harrison, of whom Jowett said "Give him six months health and all Europe will know his name." (There were no such months.) In the former, the industrial world, he has taken a modest and long-continuing part. It gave him the theme for an admirable novel of a Lancashire family and industrial life, *Hepplestalls*. Plays and books and journalism became his life. Like so many Lancashire men, he has preferred for many years to live in London. His Manchester fellowship dispersed. The Swan Club sang before it died. And the song was not a lamentation.

IVOR BROWN.

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WALES—A RE-ASSESSMENT

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**A COUNTRY  
OF  
MEMORABLE  
HONOUR**

Thomas Firbank

It is fitting that the author of that Welsh "classic" *I Bought a Mountain*, should have undertaken this re-assessment of Wales. Mr. Firbank's survey has been made as a result of a recent journey he took (mainly on foot) right through the Principality, meeting all sorts and conditions of people. 10/6 net.

**HARRAP**

**A WRITER OF DREAMS**

FORREST REID. A Portrait and a Study.  
By Russell Burlingham. Faber. 25s.

FOR some forty years Forrest Reid, who died in 1947, was a fairly frequent contributor to the lists of new novels, and now and then he brought out a work of criticism or of other varieties. Living in Belfast and occasionally visiting particular friends in England, he was regarded by his contemporaries in general as something of a recluse, and his writings made their way without much aid from personal impacts. Before the first War he was recognized as a novelist who did not deal in plots so much as in qualities, and sought to express an elusive beauty or melody running through experience rather than to invent actions. The autobiographical element was strong in Forrest Reid's work, early and late. It was not surprising that to the last he was among those authors who are not popular favourites (it is true that he lived to see one of his novels become a "Penguin") but whose spell holds quite a numerous minority reading and blessing them.

Mr. de la Mare introduces Mr. Burlingham's book about Forrest Reid with the briefly disclosed memories of a great friendship and a community of literary enthusiasms. "For years and years we 'took in' one another's proofs: his a model, mine a sort of literary mincemeat. He never spared any pains, his counsel was beyond price." It may be expected that in due time a full account will be written of the affinities between these two friends and yet others of their generation. "At a step," it was written concerning Forrest Reid's *Uncle Stephen* (1931), "we may be in dreamland or out of it again." and Mr. Burlingham, including that book among the five novels which he examines with especial deliberation, thinks of Mr. de la Mare's *The Return* in connection with it. The word "magic" has of course been repeatedly applied to the imaginative field in which these novelists move, and there too Kipling himself had his seasons.

If recollection of the reception of

Forrest Reid's novels leaves the feeling that even those who perceived his intentions and enjoyed his style were apt to think that he never entirely achieved his masterpiece, one of his "digressions" surely obtained and retains complete acceptance as a distinctly great performance. This is his *Illustrators of the Sixties*, the beautifully produced volume which Mr. Burlingham describes as "packed with information and yet unhampered by any trace of pedantry, fastidious yet personal and warmly human." Even this book by its theme was limited in its public, and Mr. Burlingham sees its origin in Forrest Reid's passion "for the neglected and the little considered." He adds also that the artists represented had the same kind of vision as Reid himself. Many passages in the enchanting commentary throughout *Illustrators* support this, and prove that the seeming digression was always near the centre of Forrest Reid's spiritual region. Such is the note on Arthur Hughes's pictures for George MacDonald's *At the Back of the North Wind*: for instance, "North Wind herself varies in a dream-like fashion; she is now hardly more than the wind, or a whirl of vapour; she is now a lady who leads the little boy by the hand; she is now a goddess in whose hair he flies over the earth; she is now a colossal figure"...

Though the attitude of Forrest Reid towards the world at large was not that of a recluse, he was not ambitious of being a public character, and the easy-going biography which Mr. Burlingham has provided is of the right sort for the man. He was indeed, we are reminded, "one of the leading players" of a most exacting game, but that game was croquet. As for the stage of life, "it was really the wings that he preferred—you saw so much more of the play." Truly he chose his experiences, and these were such as to maintain what Hazlitt called the feeling of immortality in youth. Other occurrences were not forgotten but remained as facts only. At the age of twenty-seven, giving up his employment in the tea trade, Forrest Reid went to Christ's College, Cambridge. But the Cambridge scene was



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never more than a scene to him, if it amounted even to that. He could only retreat into Ulster and thence emerge as the wanderer into friendly uplands and companionships by the way; or else, through his writings, which he took seriously enough to recast some of them after many years, he reappeared as a poetic presence.

Thus, when it is also allowed that Forrest Reid described his world and its moving circumstances in some of his books, the biographer's task appears restricted; the usual system of detailed narrative is rejected by Mr. Burlingham in reasonable preference of an informal and graphic "portrait." The rest—and this is by far the bigger part of the book—is criticism, to which is added what the carefulness of Forrest Reid naturally began, namely, a bibliography. Mr. Burlingham goes closely into many of the works and their materials, and in that practical department he can direct

and instruct his reader; but the main point is the discovering of the purpose or intuition which kept Forrest Reid's pen in progress year after year. Upon this question Mr. Burlingham often throws a better light than the familiar word "magic" has done. He is watchful over the preliminary problem of finding Forrest Reid clear of temporary influences, and he avoids certain assumptions. "Forrest Reid was no mystic, and had little sympathy with the mystical temperament." But he sought to do justice by art to the life "full of sunlight and earth's loveliness, yet ever haunted by mystery and fringed with dream." EDMUND BLUNDEN.

### PERSIAN ADVENTURE

BLIND WHITE FISH IN PERSIA. By Anthony Smith. *George Allen and Unwin*. 16s.

HERE is the fascinating story of how four Oxford undergraduates went by lorry to Persia, mainly for the fun of the thing, one gathers, but ostensibly, and quite genuinely too, in order to obtain information about fauna, flora, geography, and Qanats. The Exploration Club of the University of Oxford considered that the scientific purposes of the four undergraduates merited support, and so they enabled them to equip an expedition to one of the obscurest and hottest of Persian provinces, that of Kirman. The literary result is this remarkably well observed account of life in an unchanged part of Persia to-day, and, unless I am much mistaken, the best record yet made of the management, maintenance and organization of Qanats.

It may be that some readers do not know what a Qanat is. The word is of obscure origin and denotes the ingenious system of underground channels by which water is conveyed from hills to inhabited places throughout the Iranian plateau. Persia contains the classic because the most extensive ground of Qanats. It is here that they can best be studied, and nowhere better than in the South-East, where waterless conditions are on such a scale that it is a perpetual wonder that cities the size of Yazd and Kirman should

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continue there. (They were built when the deserts of to-day were well wooded and grassy, it is supposed.) The undergraduates lived a life of the utmost rigour in Kirmanian villages, from which Mr. Smith made frequent descents into the Qanats through the ventilation shafts.

The author is not primarily a Qanatist, but a zoologist, and he was drawn into Qanat studies by curiosity in an apparently well-evidenced supposal that Qanats are the home of a peculiar tribe of blind white fish. Mr. Smith found fish in plenty during his investigations, but they were neither white nor blind. The failure was compensated a hundredfold, and best of all he discovered Persia, of which he has given a description which deserves to rank high in the imposing literature produced by our countrymen on the native land of Hajji Baba.

The book is not perfect, being unevenly written, and spoilt by some mistakes. It is quite impossible to write a book about Persia without inaccuracies (they are even to be found in Curzon), because the genius of Iran is averse to precision, and more interested in such speculations as to whether fish are blind and white. Most of the many slips in the book are therefore entirely excusable, notably when Mr. Smith asserts that Shah Abbas built the golden dome of Qum, since a majority of Persians ascribe all ancient buildings to this sovereign or the mythical Jamshid; but some of his errors could have been easily avoided if someone who knew the Persian language had read the proofs. In one place he translates *Nigar kun* ("Look out!") as "Approximately." Outside his chosen area of Kirman and its Qanats his admirable gift of observation sometimes leaves him. Of the delectable city of Yezd he writes that "the total result is less interesting" than Isfahan, unaware that he is speaking of a place famed for a superb Timurid mosque, one of the great masterpieces of all Moslem Asia. The more accessible joys of Isfahan are also underrated, the unique *Ali Gapu* being insulted with the surprising epithet of "uninspiring." Every now and again Mr. Smith indulges the bad habit of

talking about "the Persian," "the muqanni," "the mullah," etc., when he means to generalize. It is but a step from here to "Your fellah." This is a question of taste, perhaps, but not so, I think, the occurrence of two passages of needless self-reproach which serve no purpose but to puzzle the reader, and betray, I fancy (possibly I am wrong here), the malign literary influence of Colonel Van der Post.

All these cavillings are very paltry, however, when the book is considered as a whole. Its excellence is best shown, perhaps, apart from the great quantity of well-ordered information, in its humour. Persia is a madly funny place, but it is very difficult to convey that fact without disrespect to its ancient and delightful people, or without combatting arrogance with patronizing airs. Mr. Smith stints us of none of the farce of his pilgrimage, and yet he contrives to make us share his sincere recognition of the Persians as people deserving of respect and love. He has written a very good book.

CHRISTOPHER SYKES.

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## Novels

THE RETREAT. P. H. Newby. Cape. 12s. 6d.

THE CHANCTONBURY RING. Royston Morley. Methuen. 15s.

BLANKET BOY'S MOON. Peter Lanham and A. S. Mopeli-Paulus. Collins. 12s. 6d.

FIVE ROUNDABOUTS TO HEAVEN. John Bingham. Gollancz. 9s. 6d.

THE DYING UKRAINIAN. Patrick Howarth. Bodley Head. 9s. 6d.

IN *The Retreat*, Mr. P. H. Newby's very remarkable gifts are used to arrest disbelief in a very curious situation. A flying officer named Knight is caught up in the retreat from Dunkirk and later is rescued from the bombed transport which is carrying him to England. Instead of going home to the wife whom, we are told, he loves exceptionally, Knight goes off to some old friends without notifi-

cation to anyone and thus becomes, in effect, a deserter.

The friends, too, have their troubles. They are Hesketh, and his wife Jane, whose baby has recently been born dead. Jane has become almost unhinged as a result of this experience, but Hesketh, who loves her completely and selflessly, protects her without questioning. She roams about the darkened streets during the black-out and Knight roams with her, two unhappy creatures who have lost their moorings. They become lovers, and the reader accepts this, as part of one of those strange dream-like sequences which sometimes occur in life when the trappings of routine are dissolved. The end is tragedy for Jane and for Hesketh; reunion for Knight and Helen, but nothing seems to be solved thereby and if the book is intended as an allegory I can only say that I failed to find the clue. But the central episode, the wanderings of Jane and Knight, with Hesketh waiting as patiently as God in the background, has poignancy and force.

Clues, however, are embarrassingly obvious in Mr. Royston Morley's *The Chanctonbury Ring*, which is concerned with the later fortunes of six childhood playmates. The book begins with snapshots from their earliest, almost unconscious, years and these forgotten experiences are presumed to determine their lives. As a straightforward domestic melodrama I might have enjoyed the book which is quite well written. But the Freudian Doom stifles all; little is left to will or chance and the characters are not of the stature to dispel the effect of artifice.

*Blanket Boy's Moon* is a documentary rather than a novel and most of the questions it raises are outside the scope of a reviewer of fiction. It is written in a style following the native idiom; from a story supplied by a Basuto chieftain. Monare, the principal character, is a simple Basuto who is lured to Johannesburg by rumours of wealth. He is a Christian, but the fact that his Christianity is a top-dressing on his dark ancestral animism is made very clear even

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before he becomes implicated in the ritual murder for which, in the end, he is hung. In the meantime, he is shown learning to become a responsible human creature; he behaves heroically in a mine disaster and, again, in the Durban race riots between the Africans and the Indians, which are dramatically described. But none of these things can save him from the temporal punishment which is his due; he knows it and dies stoically. There is no doubting the authenticity of the picture of life in South Africa as presented in this book, nor do its incidents seem overcoloured or distorted by prejudice. The black man is bullied by policemen and low-grade officials with a little brief authority; he is befriended by Europeans of a higher cultural level; he is often swindled by disreputable members of his own race. A disquieting piece of evidence offered by this book is that Christianity, as a reconciling element between races, has ceased to work. One of the most moving characters in the book is the Moruti, the coloured Christian minister who acts as a real pastor to Monare, but in spite of his counsel, Monare turns to Islam because its practical emphasis on "equal brotherhood" makes a more direct appeal to the African and Islam is, moreover, the religion of another "coloured" race.

*Five Roundabouts to Heaven* is one of those very sophisticated thrillers in which Presentation is All. The narrator, a very omniscient narrator, is called Peter Harding and the book is threaded together with flashbacks to the summer which the characters, when young, spent at a chateau in Orleans. These interludes have in fact very little to do with the story and as a method of revealing the personalities they seem to me not very successful. The best stretch of writing in the book describes the race between two would-be murderers; it is brilliantly done and the end is in doubt until the last paragraph. It would have been more exciting still if one could have felt that any of the characters was a human being. Fortunately, one is not required to believe anything of the sort about the

characters in *The Dying Ukrainian*, an extraordinarily good thriller of the classic kind. From the superb opening: "Bradman. They haven't got Bradman," we know exactly where we are and we can settle down to enjoy ourselves without disquieting speculations. A man is run down by a non-stop lorry on a country road; the accident is witnessed by Christian Mallory, a university lecturer who is a remarkable linguist and the dying man is carried to the surgery of a Polish doctor. When he babbles in Ukrainian before he dies, both men can understand him, and we know at once that he was a secret agent and that Christian Mallory will be prevailed upon to assume his identity. But there are many neat and modish touches to the bogus agent's progress to the "higher-ups"—in this case, credibly drawn Russians whose "plot" is ingenious and substantial.

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## BOOKS IN BRIEF

THE revival of interest in Carlyle supervised by Lady Bliss and Mr. Julian Symons has received a valuable impetus from the issue of *Carlyle: An Anthology* (Longmans, 16s.) prepared by Dr. G. M. Trevelyan, O.M. His introduction introduces the perfect Carlyle anthology.

The work of Sir Osbert Sitwell is nearly always magnificent. His *Collected Stories* (Macmillan, with Gerald Duckworth, 25s.) number thirty-two, and there is a characteristic Preface, in which the writer explains how, why and, on at least one occasion, when he writes them.

Messrs. George Allen & Unwin may be thanked for publishing *In My Solitary Life* (25s.), an abridgement of the last three volumes of Augustus Hare's diffuse autobiography. Potted Hare makes admirable desultory reading.

*The True Voice of Feeling: Studies in English Romantic Poetry* (Faber, 25s.) is divided into two parts. In the first, Sir Herbert Read sets out to trace the discovery and evolution of "organic form" in English poetry. The second is composed of miscellaneous essays touching on the same theme. Sir Herbert is among the most honest and profound of contemporary critics.

*The Crowning of the Sovereign* (Methuen, 10s. 6d.) has been written by Dr. Jocelyn Perkins, Sacrist of Westminster Abbey, and a member of the Collegiate Body of the Abbey since a year before the death of Queen Victoria. The author's object is to help as many people as possible to "acquire an intelligent understanding of one of the greatest and noblest services in the world."

Miss Muriel Masfield offers in *Peacocks and Primroses* (Bles, 21s.) an introduction to Disraeli's novels. Not at all a bad idea

for times when he is read so rarely. The book takes an unusual shape, as it consists of the author's commentary linking extracts from the books.

The life of Lucrezia Borgia has not escaped the criticisms of history. In *The Marriage at Ferrara* (Murray, 21s.) Mr. Simon Harcourt Smith puts forward a new and generous estimate of her character.

Among the new books of verse, mention must be made of *Selected Poems* (Faber, 7s. 6d.), by Idris Davies, who writes with fervour and realism of the Welsh mining valleys, of Ronald Duncan's *The Rape of Lucretia* (Faber, 9s. 6d.), the competent libretto of Mr. Britten's opera, and of Kenneth Hare's *The Ballad of Sir John Philpot* (Hale, 8s. 6d.).

G. B. Stern specializes in a kind of autobiographical chronicle that is all her own. She flits discursively from one topic to another so that the reader soon feels that he is enjoying the company of a brilliant conversationalist who also excels in monologue. *A Name To Conjure With* (Collins, 15s.) is a bedside book *de luxe*.

Anything about salvage has always fascinated me and *Epics of Salvage* (Cassell, 18s.), by David Masters, ranges over a series of great feats of rescue, including the strange story of the S.S. *Niagara*, hit by a mine thirty miles from Whangarei, with £2,500,000 of gold on board. She went to the bottom, but from a record depth all but £200,000 was recovered.

The life of the younger Baldwin Hamey (the Englishman) is told in *The Stranger's Son* (Bles, 21s.) and it continues the history begun in *Hamey the Stranger*. Mr. John Keevil shows a remarkable knowledge of Elizabethan London.

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## Motoring

# NEW CAR ROAD-TESTED THE "CONTINENTAL" BENTLEY

By THE EARL OF CARDIGAN

I USED to know an old lady whose favourite proposition it was that the world had gone crazy since her young days, and was getting progressively crazier. She would have felt this theory to be greatly strengthened, could she have foreseen that I would spend a recent week-end driving a car which was designed for road speeds up to 120 m.p.h., which cost nearly £5,000 (not reckoning purchase tax) to buy, and which could be bought by any rich foreigner but by no Englishman.

The craziness of this last factor cannot well be denied—unless by some hard-visaged economist. The "Continental" Bentley is, however, an "Export Only" model. This means that, although English craftsmen may build it, English motorists (apart from your fortunate Motoring Correspondent and a few others of that ilk) are debarred from enjoying it. And this, with the new-found meekness of our race, we must no doubt put up with.

What of this Bentley's 120 m.p.h. performance? It is easy, but misleading, to declare that no one but an idiot would wish to do 120 m.p.h. on a public road. That is not really the point. If I am to succeed in passing on some inkling of the pleasure which the "Continental" Bentley gave me, I must introduce it rather as "the car that does sixty on half-throttle." Let us start from there in assessing its notable merits.

Fantastic it may seem; but, as this car floats along at a nice, steady mile-a-minute, one has the impression of the throttle being *less* than half open. One's foot rests with almost no pressure on the accelerator. The six-cylinder, 4½-litre (31.5 h.p.) engine is very nearly inaudible, and one must look at the rev. counter to

observe that it is turning at the comfortable and moderate rate of just over 2,000 r.p.m. That the engine is there, one can never forget; for a slight additional pressure of the right foot brings forth an instant surge of power. It is very much there—but it is never obtrusive.

The Bentley's exceptional silence is unquestionably aided by the very careful streamlining of both coachwork and exterior chassis parts. (Streamlining usually means cramped headroom; so let me remark in passing that, in the back seat, you can wear your cloth cap comfortably, but must take off your trilby hat.) The airflow slides away behind the car with almost no disturbance—a fact which may be demonstrated by partly opening a window (unnecessary; because there is an air-conditioning system) and noting the sharp increase of noise as the air-stream beats itself against the framing.

It is difficult to describe degrees of silence; but lest anyone should doubt the Bentley's quietness, I will record the following conversation between my wife and myself after a fairly fast run along the Bath Road. My wife, looking censoriously at the instrument panel: "I don't know when I've heard a clock with such a loud tick as that one!" Myself, getting out pencil: "So you've noticed it too? All right; I'll make a note of it." And before me, as I write these words, is the note: "Clock has v. loud tick!"

The silent, easy mile-a-minute is, of course, only a part of the Bentley's performance. The rate of acceleration is tremendous, especially between 2,000 and 3,000 r.p.m.; and the gearbox, with abnormally high ratios for second, third and top gears, enables this great power





THE NEW 4½ LITRE "CONTINENTAL" BENTLEY.

to be brought forth at any moment. A speed of 100 m.p.h. is said to be available in third: I will vouch for it that 80 m.p.h. is reached with a considerable reserve of power still unused. In top gear, I noted a speed of 98 m.p.h. on a very ordinary—and not even dead straight—stretch of road. I am not fond of going over the hundred mark; but I have no difficulty in believing that another 20 m.p.h. was there—had the road been straighter, and had I been more sure of having sole use of it.

Of the other two gears, second gives vivid acceleration to 60 m.p.h. and above, while first gear—although likewise an abnormally high ratio—is low enough to ensure an easy start, even on steep hills. To check this, I did a stop-and-start test, with four up, on a gradient of 1 in 6. A conventional, right-hand gear lever gives very pleasant and easy control, with synchromesh guaranteeing a fool-proof engagement of every ratio except the lowest.

With a car of this sort, cruising easily at speeds which represent maximum for the ordinary vehicle, two other factors are of prime importance. Road holding must be first-rate; and with the Bentley it certainly is so. There is a hand control, varying the resistance of the shock-absorbers between "hard" and "soft." The range of control is not especially wide; yet it suffices, for in the full "hard" position, the car sits down on the road in a thoroughly satisfying way.

Brakes of exceptional power are also called for; and here again the Bentley does not disappoint. The braking system is unusual, hydraulic operation being used in front and mechanical means at the rear—a Servo motor multiplying the pressure of the driver's foot. The result is light braking, with great but perfectly progressive stopping power.

Where so much is excellent, one's critical faculty is of course rendered very alert. The hand-brake offended mine; for it is one of those modern things that sprout

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out on a stalk from under the instrument panel—termed by the Americans a “parking brake.” Thousands of cars have just such a parking brake; but frankly, I do not think that the Bentley should be numbered in this company.

Another control which fails to satisfy is the hand-throttle. The supreme exponent of the precision hand-throttle was the late Sir Henry Royce, and his methods are certainly not unknown to those who design the modern Bentley cars. Let me therefore merely remark that that great engineer would be sorely grieved by the hand-throttle of the “Continental”.

To return, however, to the Bentley's road performance: the extreme flexibility of the high-efficiency engine is a remarkable feature. The gearbox, as I have shown, can be used to very great advantage; yet one is not obliged to use it. If it takes one's fancy to drive for a hundred miles in top gear, there is really nothing, barring a “freak” hill, to prevent it. The car can be driven as a high-speed sports model; but equally it can be driven as if it were a town carriage of the most innocuous sort.

Incidentally, I would judge it to be capable of a surprising degree of economy. Using Esso Extra during my test run, I found not only the expected freedom from “pinking” but also a gratifying distance covered without refuelling. Naturally, there were times when I drove hard and therefore wastefully; but I should say that, if one were to keep the rev. counter needle steady at about 2,000 r.p.m., the Bentley could defeat, for sheer economy, cars of very much lower horsepower. I can quite well believe the claim that 20 m.p.g. is usual, and sometimes bettered.

This brings me back once again to hailing this new Bentley as the car that does its mile-a-minute on half throttle. This one supreme feature brings unnumbered advantages with it—silence and ease of running; absence of strain and fatigue; moderate use of fuel; slow rate of wear and tear. A single week-end may seem to tell one little as to how many years of life a car should have; yet one does not

have to be a profound engineer to see that moderate “revs.” make for longevity.

Finally, one may ask: is it wild optimism to put on the market a car which costs nearly £5,000 ex works, which is likely to cost £1,000 more when delivered abroad, and which would cost some unthinkable amount with British purchase tax added? I hope not; for, granted that there are still a few people who have money of that sort to spend, it can hardly be argued that a car is over-priced when it sets out conscientiously to get as near to mechanical perfection as modern knowledge will allow.

Indeed, I would rather say: spend the extra £110 (for the list price is £4,890 already); make perfect a few more details of the sort which I touched upon earlier. At a level £5,000, a car of this quality should still be able to attract buyers from amongst those who can afford the very best.

CARDIGAN.

## RECORD REVIEW

By ALEC ROERTSON

### Orchestral

THE thin or steely tone of the violins on their E strings is still a disturbing factor in many orchestral recordings, particularly in loud passages, though that this need not be so is shown this month by a musical recording of Arensky's *Variations on a Theme of Tchaikovsky*, op. 35a and Grieg's *Holberg Suite*, op. 40, delightfully played by Harold Bryns and his Chamber Orchestra (Capitol CTL7022), and in the Beethoven Seventh Symphony, played by Karajan and the Philharmonia Orchestra. The conductor has given way to his tendency to hurry both in the *Allegretto* and in the *Finale*, and the woodwind are strangely sour in tone at times. He is at his best in the first and third movements of the symphony (Columbia 33CX1035).

Mendelssohn's Third (“Scotch”) and Fourth (“Italian”) Symphonies have been recorded by Solti and the L.S.O. (Decca LXT2768) Beecham and the R.P.O.

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## Record Review

(Columbia 33C1006) respectively, but both of them suffer from poor string tone. This is especially unfortunate in the Beecham disc in which the performance is obviously a very good one. The *Midsummer Night's Dream* music (*Overture, Nocturne, Scherzo*) with Schubert's *Rosamunde* music (*Overture, B flat Entr'acte, G major Ballet Music*) played by Van Beinum and the Concertgebouw Orchestra (Decca LXT2770) fares better. The Mendelssohn *Overture* lacks magic but the other two movements, and all the Schubert pieces, are delightful: and the recording, though not of the best, is adequate.

Prokofiev's Fifth Symphony, composed in 1944, certainly does not live up to its pretensions as "a symphony of the greatness of the human spirit," and could hardly do so when that spirit has defined frontiers, but as an essay in brilliant orchestral colourings and attractive rhythms it is worth hearing. It is played in fine style by the Danish State Radio Orchestra (Tuxen) and very well recorded (Decca LXT2764). Equally good is another colourful score, the four movements of Rimsky-Korsakov's ever delightful *Golden Cockerel Suite* which is vintage Ansermet/Suisse Romande Orchestra (Decca LXT2769). I strongly recommend Szymon Goldberg's most musical performances of two of Mozart's Violin Concertos, G major (K216) and D major (K218) excellently accompanied by Süsskind and the Philharmonia Orchestra, but I wish he had cut down or entirely omitted the cadenzas (Parlophone PMA 1003). Also recommended are the light-weight and colourful piano concerto by Khachaturian (Moura Lympany, L.P.O., Fistoulari, Decca LXT2767) and an endearing monument to Constant Lambert, his *Rio Grande* and parts of both Walton's *Façade Suites* (Philharmonia Orchestra) with Lambert conducting (Columbia 33SX1003—issued before on SP).

### Chamber Music

An outstandingly good performance of Mozart's two wonderful Piano quartets in G minor and E flat major by Clifford Curzon and the Amadeus Quartet, the pianist playing as one inspired and inspir-



## Record Review

ing (Decca LXT2772); and some fascinating, witty, and lovely early Haydn quartets well played by the Schneider Quartet on Nixa HLP13 to 15 (Op. 17, Nos. 1 to 6) and equally well recorded—for the first time. The Pascal Quartet continue their Beethoven series with Nos. 2 and 3, op. 18, on Nixa CLP1202, No. 6, op. 18 and the F minor, op. 95 on Nixa CLP1204. The playing is of very variable quality, as also is the recording, but the good intentions of the artists and their devotion to their task gains respect.

### Songs and Opera

At last a good recording of Mozart's motet *Exsultate Jubilate* backed by Pamina's aria, *L'amero sarò Costante* from *Il Re Pastore* and Susanna's *Venite, inginocchiatevi*. Charming singing by Hilda Gueden, especially in the motet, and lovely accompanying by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra (Erede) (Decca LX3103). Elisabeth Schwarzkopf and Gerald Moore are both at the top of their form in Wolf's *Wiegenlied in Sommer Maus* and *Mamsfallen-Sprüchlein*, and Strauss's *Hat gesagt und Schlechtes Wetter*. This is an absolutely enchanting disc, splendidly recorded (Columbia LX1577).

Our prayers have been heard and H.M.V. have recorded the whole of Tristan and Isolde, every note, with Flagstad, Suthaus, Thebom, Fischer-Dieskau, Greindl, Furtwängler and the Philharmonia Orchestra (H.M.V. ALP 1030-35).

It is the swan song of the great soprano in this part and nobly and superbly she rises to the occasion, with the added emotion the later years brought. Suthaus is an admirable Tristan and gives the performance of his life in the last act. Fischer-Dieskau is not yet the ideal Kurvenal he will become one day and Greindl is no Ludwig Weber, nor is Blanche Thebom the Brangaena this Isolde deserved; but one and all are caught up into Furtwängler's inspired conception of the glorious score. The orchestra, under him, play like angels, even better than their best, and the recording is a triumph for the engineers.

ALEC ROBERTSON.

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